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THE ANTIQUITY AND CHORONOLOGY OF THE TAMIL LANGUAGE AND THE CLASSICAL TAMIL LITERATURE

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Inside The Book

The book deals with the antiquity of Tamilnadu and the Chronology of Sangam Classical literature as gleaned from the archaeological and literary evidences. The origin and antiquity of Tamilnadu goes back to the Palaeolithic Age, dated some one lac years ago. The archaeological excavations conducted in the various places have yielded large mass of material throwing a flood of light on this subject.

Similarly the chronology of sangam literature was originally placed between the 3rd century B.C and Ist Century A.D. But the recent archaeological material brought out from the excavations take the literature back to the middle of second millennium B.C. and closer to the Harappan civilisation. The Sanskrit has nothing to do with the development of Tamil language and literature.

THE ANTIQUITY AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE TAMIL LANGUAGE AND THE CLASSICAL TAMIL LITERATURE

Tamil country is one of the oldest regions in the world on par with ancient civilised countries such as Africa, Egypt, Sumeria, Babylonia, China, Greece etc. The deep antiquity of Tamil Country is well attested by the geological, archaeological and historical sources. The rock formation of the Western Ghats coupled with rivers like Korralaiar, Palar, Kaveri, Vaikai point to the antiquity of the land.

The earliest man appeared on the earth some two lacs years ago and Tamilnad served as one of his habitats at that time. There are four river terraces and sixteen natural caves which bear testimony to the activities of the pre-historic man- i.e. the Stone Age Man. These terraces and caves are located on the banks of the river Korralaiar near Poondi reservoir some 30 Km. away from Chennai.

The archaeological excavations conducted at the cave at Gudiam had yielded bifacial hand axes of old stone age man. An extensive explorations around the river terraces had yielded hundreds of stone tools used by the old Stone Age people of the poondi region, near Chennai. These bifacial hand axes are very similar to those found at Africa and they bear testimony to the contacts between Tamilnadu and Africa during the Palaeolithic Age i.e. one lack years ago. These bifacial hand axes are named 'Madras axes' and the whole stone age industry as 'Madras Industry'.

The archaic Tamil country has yet another proof to establish Her antiquity i.e. the find of 'Sand Dunes' in the Tirunelveli region and the Microlithic tools collected from them. The microlithic industry was found at a place called Sayarpuram in the District. The tools are dated to around 10,000 to 6000 B.C. This industry is not commonly seen in other parts of India except at Kashmir. However such microlithis are widely seen in Sri Lanka which connects the Southern part of Tamilnadu with Ceylon. It seems that Tamilnadu and Ceylon were together facilitating the movement of people and ideas between these two countries in the pre-historic times.

The close ties between these two countries have been existing from time immemorial and there were wars and peace treaties concluded between the rulers of these two nations right from the days of the Tamil Kings of the Sangam Age to the time of the Late Cholas. It is to be recalled at this juncture that Ceylon was conquered and converted into a province under the Chola ruler Raja Raja I and the conquered region was named as 'Mumudi Chola Mandalam'. This was done as an administrative measure.

The Ceylonese Chronicles like Mahavamsa and Deepa Vamsa contain numerous references to Sangam rulers and Sangam Age Tamil society belonging to a few centuries before and after the Christian Era.

The Palaeolithic Age was succeeded by another stone age phase named New Stone Age which had blessed Tamil Nadu with its presence during the beginning of Second Millennium BC (C 2000 BC to 1000 BC). But the stone Age has not widely prevalent in the Tamil country and only a few pockets like Paiyampalli and Appukkallu in the North Arcot and Dharmapuri districts are located the New Stone Age settlements.

The South Indian Neolithic Culture particularly Tamilian Neolithic culture has no parallas outside South India. It is because of the fact that when Tamilnadu was experiencing the Neolithic culture, the Gujarath and Rajasthan experiencing the Late Harappan Culture and the rest of India including Maharashtra the so called chalcolithic Culture. The Gangetic valley was especially going through the Copper Hoard culture which was contemporary with the Aryans.

The Neolithic culture was short lived and could not penetrate deep into the other parts of Tamilnadu as the latter were enjoying a very sophisticated, well advanced, highly civilised cultures of the Pre Iron and Iron Age (C1500 BC – 200 AD). The later part of the Iron Age coincides with the Early Sangam Age (C 1000 BC – 300 BC).

It may now be examined how the Neolithic culture of the Tamil be considered as the contemporary of the Late Harappa and Chaleolithic cultures mentioned above. There are both archaeological evidences as well as literary references. They are:

Archaeological evidences

The Dull Red ware and the Burnished grey wares of Tamilnadu have been also found at late Harappan sites like Lothal, (Gujarath).

Very recently a Neolithic Celt with four Indus letters has been located at a place Kandiyur (Plate 1). This find exhibits the earliest cultural contacts between the Late Harappan and the Tamils. Secondly the Urn burial (child burial), the pottery industries like Dull Red Ware, have been noticed in both cultures and regions.

The next phase, the Early Iron Age (1500 BC – 1000 BC) is very early in Tamilnadu. When the whole of North India has passed through several stages to reach Iron Age, Tamilnadu had jumped from Palaeolithic or Neolithic (as the case may be) to the Iron Age skipping bronze Age, Copper Age etc. This fact clearly exhibits that the Tamils were enjoying an advanced stage of civilisation even during the proto historic Times.

The Iron Age of South India is characterised by the use of profuse quantity of iron and the black and red ware vessels. Agricultural equipment and weapons of warfare were manufactured in large scale and that led to the progress of agriculture and formation of society and leadership. Frequent wars broke out between the neighbouring rulers as varieties of weapons of war fare were put into use in such wars. The Mahabaratha war and many battles of the Sangam Age may be cited good examples.

The late Harappan Culture and the Iron Age Culture of the Tamils have many traits in common. The black-and red ware tradition, the hand made

earthenware vessels like eating plates, vessels with spouts luted to the belly, incense burners, lotas, flat based bowels, multiple pots, were common to both the cultures. The gold jewellery, beads of some precious stones (Carnelian beads), terracotta figures of Mother goddess, spindle whorls, massive bricks, have been also reported from the excavations of sites pertaining to these cultures. Especially the excavations at Timkkampuliyur, Uraiyur (Trichy District) Sanur (Chingleput District), Korkai, Kayal, Adichchanallur (Tirunelveli District) have yielded tangible evidences to connect these two cultures.

In addition there is a large volume of graffiti bearing potshards collected from the Iron Age sites of Tamilnadu dated between 1500 BC – 300 BC some of the graffiti are ligatured which could be read based on the languages of the proto-Dravidans especially the Tamil language. This factor is discussed at great length later. These graffiti, nearly 5000 in number from various parts of India bear Indus like signs, Brahmi letters and proto Tamil letters. The combination of graffiti plus Indus sign and Brahmi letters constitute a class by themselves and seem to have served the purpose of a script for the period from the fall of Late Harappans and the beginning of the early historic times (1500 BC to 300 BC). this script may be called proto-Brahmi or proto Tamil in Tamilnadu.

The oneness of these two cultures is again attested by the find of white painted black ware in a few sites like Uraiyur and Korkai. They are on par with the white painted black ware of the central India (Ahar). There are literary references in the early Sangam literature that the Velirs are none else than the early settlers of the late Harappan and Maharashtra regions.

In this connection it is to be borne in mind that the Maharashtra region and also Gujarat of late Harappans were once occupied by the velir families. And it is believed that the Konkanam is identified with Venpulam which was none else than the Maharashtra. According to Purananuru (154), and Natrrinai (391) the Konkanam was a part of Tamilnadu and ruled by the Velir Families. Similarly Venadu (Venpulam Venadu) was one of the 12 "Kodontamilnadus". This area was the ancient Dhandakarunyam. This may also be identified with Venadu.

It may be recalled that the Maharashtra was one of the Dravidanadus in the ancient period (Late Harappan times). There were five Dravida Nadus viz. Tamil, Andhra, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Kurchara (cutch-Gujarat). It is also considered that the Dwaraka seems to serve as a centre of attraction for the early South Indian ruling families.

To cite a good example, is an Indus seal bearing the scene of a hero holding the arms of the tigers pouncing on his sides. This scene was initially interpreted to represent the Sumerian legendary hero, Gilgamesh. But the intensive study of the Harappan seals and the Tamil literature point to the fact that one of the velirs chieftains namely Irunko Vel is called Pulikatimal in the Purananuru (Purananuru, 203-204) (Plate 2).

He is said to have belonged to the Velir families of Dwaraka. But the author of the poem Kapilar referring to Pulikatimal mentions simply that he has the epithet Pulikotimal but the reason is not given by Kapilar. However there is a tradition saying that one of the ancestors of pulikotimal at Dwarapathi has killed a tiger to save a life of a Saint in the forest area of Dwarapathi.

Regarding the antiquity of the Velir families it is suggested that the Velirs were ruling in Tamilnadu around the beginning of first millennium B.C. (M. Raghavaingar).

Similarly there are other instances where a person seated on a standing tiger, a seated three headed figure surrounded by wild animals including elephants and tigers, besides humped bull. There are also representations of Durga, tree spirits, Mother goddess etc., on the seals which actually portray the animal worship, Sakthi worship, tree worship and Nature worship of the Tamils of the Sangam Age.

There are copious references to such wild animals in the Sangam literature that atleast the Late Harappan Culture is reflected, mirrored in the Sangam works. This indicates the proximity of the Harappan Culture to that of the Tamils during the fag end of the Harappan Culture (1500 to 500 BC).

The Indus civilisation exhibits several traits and features which are embedded and echoed in the sangam literature. Similarly the various scenes

on the seals representing kings, men and women, cult objects, demi-gods and goddesses, flora and fauna coupled with several cities and citadels find mention in one form or other in the Sangam literature. There is no doubt that the contemporary Sumerian, Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultural ethos, traditions, traits etc. are reflected on the seals and sealings of the Indus people. Similarly the pre-Indus language, script and traditions of the Baluchistan regions are shadowed on the Indus valley social and cultural fabric. The latter has also its feable impact on the Sangam literature also on the utterances of the Sangam poets.

All these characteristics help the archaeologists to consider the chronology of the Sangam literature to be taken back to the days of the Indus people or atleast late Harappan times as suggested earlier.

Let us now examine a few noteworthy citations of the Sangam works to recall the happenings of the Indus days.

There is a seal representing a seated figure with Buffalo horn and surrounded by wild animals like the tigers and elephants. (Plate 3) This figure may be identified with a member of the Pandya family known as Erumaiyuran. There is a reference to Erumainadu in the Silappadikaram. Erumainadu was lying outside Tamilnadu. The rulers of the Erumainadu were also called Erumai. (Ahananuru, 115). It was one of the areas of Sentamil Nadu, which may be identified with a hamlet of the Indus region. There is also a mention of Kudanadu as the land of one Erumai. (Ahananuru). Therefore the seal mentioned above may be identified with the Chief of Erumainadu of Ahananuru.

There are representations of wheel, basement of a wheel, also Ter like symbols on the seals. They also appear as Indus signs or letter, or graffiti on the Indus pottery as well as on the Tamilian pottery of the Sangam Age and earlier. It is a known fact that the Sangam rulers and chieftains possessed chariots as their vehicles. However it may be noted at this juncture that there is a reference to a Pandya King called Ter-Maran in the Velvikudi grant of the Pandyas. It is also suggested that he may be called Man-Ter-Maran meaning Maran of horse chariot (Man means horse). He was the proud possessor of a Horse Chariot. Hence the

seals and the graffiti symbols cited seem to suggest the Indus people were very familiar with horse chariots or if not mud chariots made out of terracotta or wood. Though it is believed that horse was unknown to the Indus people, Recent excavations have yielded evidences for the use of horse by the Harappans.

There is a Sangam ruler called Pulli of Venkadam. He is mentioned in 8 verses in Sangam poems – 5 by Mamulanar and 3 by Kalladanar, (Purananuru and Ahananuru). He was a Chief of Kalvar family (Clan). Kalvan means a black skinned person and he was called Kalvar Koman. The Black Chief, Kalvan may also be identified with Kalvar (Tamil word used for Kalabhra meaning an elephant.) If this identification holds good, the pulli may be called Kalvar chief meaning Chief of elephant force". Some times he is identified with one of the Kalabhra Chiefs.

The Venkadam hill lying north of Tamilnadu and it is the northern boundary and mentioned in the Purananuru (6, 7) and Manimekkalai (70-72). The people beyond the boundaries of the northern Tamilnadu are called Vaduhar in the sanga works. (Kurunthokai 11, Natrrinai 212, Purananuru 378) and also many verses in (Ahananuru). Their language was not well developed. (Ahananuru 107). this Venkadam may also be identified with the Himalayas in the North West. The Indus vally region and the Venkadam of the Sangam works may be equated and the Vaduhar may be identified with the people of the Indus valley area. It may further be said here that the Erumainadu mentioned earlier is said to have belonged to the Vaduhar Chief (Ahananuru, 253).

வடாஅது பனிபடு நெடுவரை வடக்கும்
தெனாஅது உருகெழ குமரியின் தெற்கும்
குணாஅது கரைபொரு தொடுகடல் குணக்கும்
குடா அது தொன்றுமுதிர் பௌவத்தின் குடக்கும்.

.. (Purananuru).

The above said references point to the existence of 'Sangam Age Tamilnadu beyond its imperial frontiers" and the exchange of men and material between the Indus region and Tamilnadu. Tamilnadu was like the ancient Rome which had spread its wings beyond its imperial frontiers.

Many of the proponents of the Dravido-Harppan equation put forward various kinds of linguistic evidences to establish that the Harappan language was Dravidian. According to one school of scholars (T. Burrow) Rig-veda contains 500 Dravidian loanwords. According to another scholar it was 380. It is an established fact that the Dravidian word Mayura is a loanword found in the Veda. Since there are substantial Dravidian loanwords in the Rig-Veda, which are definitely borrowed by the Aryan immigrants. It may be due to the contacts the Aryan had established with the proto-Dravidians. (See Appendix)

Regarding the origin of the Dravidians it is believed that the Dravidians speakers had an Indian origin. This theory is based upon 722 samples covering 36 Indians population. Further the renowned British Archauobocanist Dorian Fuller "proto-Dravidians were somewhere within the core range of modern Dravidians – South India."

This pronouncement is fully in conformity with the theory that the authors of Harappan civilisation and the Proto-historic Dravidians of central and South India including Tamil Nadu are Dravidians. It may be said that proto-Dravidians, the late Harappans and their script are within the close proximity of early, medieval and modern Tamils.

Megasthenes (3rd-2nd Century BC) has referred to the Pandyas, Pottery and pliny have left great accounts about the historical cities, capitals and port cities of the Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras. They have said that the towns like, Uraiyur, Vanchi and the Port cities like Puhar, Korkai, Kayal, Musiri were humming with political and trade activities. The archaeological excavations conducted at Uraiyur, Puhar, Korkai have lent enough material to check, corroborate and confirm what is said by the above said foreigners. The excavations have also yielded tangible evidences to establish the beginning of the settlement at these places earlier than the date of the above said accounts. The Carbon 14 dating available for Korkai dates the beginning of settlements at the place around 785 BC or even earlier than 785 BC (Early Phase of Iron Age). Yet another site Adichchanallur (Tirunelveli District) which lies at Southern part of Tamilnadu and within the close proximity of the Chera Kingdom is dated to 1570 BC which may be considered as the earliest date for the

early Sangam people. (See Appendix). As mentioned earlier, this site has yielded antiquities on par with the Harappan Cultural traits (C 1800-1000 BC) noticed at Harappa and Lothal (Maharashtra).

There are also epigraphical records from North India attesting to the existence and antiquity of the Sangam Tamil Kingdoms. For instance the Asokan inscriptions (3rd-2nd Century BC) mentions the existence of the Tamil Kingdoms lying outside the orbit of his empire. They are referred to as 'Independent Kingdoms". Similarly the inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga (Orissa) dated to 150 BC refers to the Tamil rulers. The Girnar inscription of Rudradaman (150 AD) also refers to the early Tamil rulers.

There are references to the existence of trade relations between Tamilnadu and the ancient Rome. The Romers are called Yavanas in the Sangam literature. The excavations in a number of places like Arikkamedu (Puduchcherry) Puhar, Uraiyur, Korkai, Kanchipuram, Vasavasamuthram (near Mahabalipuram) have brought to surface the Roman coins, Roman pottery and Roman settlements dated from 2nd century BC to 1st Century AD. Therefore archaeological excavations have helped us to compare, correlate and confirm the literary references.

Similarly there are references in the Paripadal and Pattinapallai to the existence of seaports in the Coastal regions. It is described in these poems that Poompukar port was humming with trade activities in and around the region. The well established harbour, port administration and taxation on the material are mentioned in the Purananuru also (Purananuru: 126:13-16). There are also references to lighthouses Perumpanarrupadai: 348-351. (Plate 4)

விண்பொர நிவந்த வேயா மாடத்
திரவின் மாட்டிய விலங்குசுடர் ஞெகிழி
உரவுத் ரழுவத் கொடுகலங்கரை

Shipwrecks are described in the Kalithokai (Kalithokai: 132:6-7). It is referred to as

கரைகாணாப் பௌவத்துக் கலம் சிதைந்து ஆழ்பவன்
திரைதரப் புணைபெற்றுத் தீதின்றி உய்ந்தாங்கு

The archaeological excavations exhibited traces of certain stone anchors in the coastal areas of South India. (Tanjavur University)

Similarly there are a few more references to the shipping, ship Building technology and maritime scholarship of the Sangam Tamils in the works like Cheevaka Chintamani (V. 882, 1776, 1801, and 2597 etc.)

வான் மின்னு வண்கை வடிநூற் கடற்கேள்விமைந்தர்
தான் மின்னு வீங்க கழலான்றனைச் சுழமற்றப்
பூண்மின்னு மார்பன் பொலிந்தாங்கிருந்தான் விசும்பிற்
கோன்மின்னு மீண்சூழ் களிர்மாமதித் தோற்றமொத்ததே
(Cheevaka Chintamani (verse No: 882)

மாக்கடற் பெருங்கலங் காலின் மாறுபட
டாக்கிய கயிறரிந் தோழ யங்கணும்
போக்ன பொருவன போன்று (Cheevaka Chintamani 2231)

The Tamils led a life one with the sea. Besides Rome and Greece, the Tamils had sea trade with Sumeria, Babylon, Egypt, Palestine, China and South Indies. It is also important to note that the Tamils were the first to crush the activities of the pirates to hold supremacy across the sea. The testimonials of the foreigners are given below:

Ptolemy mentions Musiri as Mouziris. Pliny observes that "If the wind Hippalus be blowing, Musiri the nearest mart of India can be reached in forty days". The Ahananuru sings the glory of Musiri as 'Musiri is such an affluent city that the glindy Yavana ship of excellent workmanship, which came crashing through the . . . . . river of the ceras viz., returned laden with pepper in exchange for gold (Ahananuru V. 149).

The Purananuru praises Musiri as follows: 'The gold from the foreign ships will be brought ashore by the boats that ply in the back waters' (Purananur V 543).

Ainkurunuru describes the Tondi port beach and streets humming with festives, music sounds etc. Tondi is called Tondippattu' (Aing, V.V. 171-180).

Ptolemy observes about Korkai and Saliyur as follows:

Korkhie (Korkai) harbour has Coastal waters with pearls. The Saliyur port is mentioned by Ptolemy as Saliyur.

Similarly Pattinappalai applaudes the Port city, Puhar. The works describes that 'great ships lie at mooving, gently rocking in the Puhar port like elephants, shaking the begs to which they are tied". (Patti 11, 172-175). Puhar is a cosmopolitan city where people of different tangers and countries met and mingle merrily". (Patti 11, 216-18).

The Purananuru also states that 'big ships entering the river-mouth and goods will be taken by the coastal people to their moorings which testify that overseas goods were straight away taken inland through rivers. Cotton cloth was the chief item among the exports from Tamil country. According to Periplus the Argaritic Muslin from Uraiyur called Argaru formed the bulk of the exports. In exchange the Romans sent gold coins, coral, wine, lead and tin, besides, sandlewood, red sandals, agil and maker (Periplus: 36); Pets and animals were also exported to Rome. Buffalos and elephants were also exported to Roman Empire (JRAS. 1906 and S. Warmington). Similarly horses were imported from Arabia.

The trade relations of the Tamils with Egypt (15th century BC) and Babylonia were also established. The export to Babylonia includes Ivory, apes, peacocks, muslin, teakwood, and sandlewood. The excavations at Ur which was the capital of the Sumerian Kings during the 4th Millennium BC bear testimony to this fact.

It may further be suggested that Tamil words are found in the Hebrew Bible. The Tamil word Togai (Peacock) is found mentioned in the Bible Tukkiyam (Plural form of Tukki). this word indicates the Tamil trader's presence on the ports of Persian Gulf during the days of King Solomon (962-930 BC). He is said to have imported Sandalwood, and peacocks for Ophir via ports on the Persian gulf. Ophir may be equated with Uvari mentioned in Tamil literature.

There is a rock painting at Kilvalai representing a Hawk-beaked figure recalling an Egyptian Painting (2nd Millennium BC). Similarly an Egyptian Edict of 15th Century BC states that Cardamon was sent to Egypt (from Tamilnadu).

The Arabs and Greeks seem to have maintained their trade relations with Tamil country as the Grek names Oryza (rice), Zingiber (Ginger), and Karpion (Cinnamon) are almost identical with their Tamil names arisi, inchiver, and karuva. They cleanly indicate that these goods were dealt with by Greek merchants. They have sent them to Europe from tamilnadu. (Dr. Winslow).

It may be concluded that the Sangam tamils had contacts with all the maritime powers of the ancient world starting from the dim past i.e. from 2nd Millennium BC upto the beginning of the Christian era. Since most of the above said contacts are mentioned in one form or other in the Sangam literature, It may safely be said that the Sangam literature has had a deep antiquity (M. Sundaram, Sea-trade of the Cankam Tamils) and the Tamil language has acquired the status of classical language from the beginning of 1st Millennium BC or even earlier.

Archaeological spade work exhibits the co-existence or the continuity of the Early Iron Age of Tamilnadu with the Sangam Age. According to T.V. Mahalingam who excavated the Kaveri Valley basin has fixed the middle of 1st Millennium B.C. as the period which is being portrayed in the Sangam literature. He further observes "The alluring picture of highly sophisticated society gathered from the early Tamil literature may be compared with results obtained by the spade of the archaeologists before forming any reliable idea of the material culture of the people of the period. Such archaeological evidence is calculated to support, supplement or correct the otherwise one sided picture we have of the early culture of Tamil Nadu".

As mentioned earlier, all other excavations conducted in Tamil nadu (excepting the sites Adichchanallur, Sanur, Kodumanal, Thirukkampuliyur) belong to the Iron Age and black and red ware culture. (C. beginning of

1st Millennium BC to the end of 1st millennium BC). The remaining sites cited above may belong to the Pre-Iron Age or Late Harappan period.

The Megalithic burial types like Dolmenoid cist, Stone circles, stone henges and Urn burials – all belong to the above said time brackets. It is suggested because the above said burials are described in the early sangam literature like Purananuru. The Purananuru describes the stone burials as 'Karkidai-meaning crowds of big stones or rubbles or boulders associated with burials i.e. Megalithic burials. (Mega=Big; lith = stone)

Similarly the un-burials are described in the Purananuru as follows:

கலம் செய் கோவே, கலம் செய் கோவே
. . . .
சேண்விளங்க சிறப்பிற் செம்பியர் மருகண்
கொடிநுடங்கு யானை நெடுமா வளவன்
தேவ ருலக மெய்தின னாதலின்
அன்னோற் கவிக்கங் கண்ணகன் றாழி
வனைதல் வேட்டனை யாயி னெனையது வம்
இருநிலத் திகிரியாய் பெருமலை
மண்ணா வனைத லொல்லுமோ நினக்கே (Purananuru: 225:9-8)

கவிசெந் தாழிக் கவிபுறத் துஇருந்த
செவிசெஞ் சேவலும் பொகுவலும் வெருவர
வாய்வன் காக்கையும் கூகையும் கூடிப்
பே எய் ஆயமொடு பெட்டாங்கு வழங்கும்
காடுமுன் னினனே கள்கா முருநன் (Purananuru: 0 238)

கலம்செய் கோவே கலம்செய் கோவே
அச்சுடைச் சாகாட்டு ஆரம் பொருந்திய
சிறுவெண் பல்லி போலத் தன்னொடு
சுரம்பல வந்த எமக்கும் அருளி
வியன்மலர் அகன்பொழில் ஈமத் தாழி
அகலிதாக வனைமோ
நனந்தலை மூதூர்க் கலம்செய் கோவே (Purananuru – 364 : 11-13)

முதுமரப் பொத்திற் கதுமென இயம்பும்
கூகைக் கோழி ஆனாத்
தாழிய பெருங்கா டெய்திய ஞான்றே (Purananuru: 364:11-13)

According to the above said references it is gathered that the dead are inserted into the Urn in an inverted position. There are also instances of burying two dead in one Urn.

It may be recalled at this juncture that the Neolithic people of Tamilnadu as well the Harappans have practised the above said burial. (mentioned already) Alexander Rea (1902-03) had discovered urn-burials at Adichchanallur and according to him 'the dead were inserted into the Urn in the inverted position. (ASI – Report – 1902).

Therefore the Urn-burials described in the Sangam literature fully tally with the actual Urn-burials excavated in Tamilnadu particularly at Adichchanallur. The same practice was followed in the ancient Greek and Cyprus.

Therefore it may be said at the outset that Indus Valley and Adichchanallur exhibit oneness in many respects (T.N. Seshaingar).

In the light of the above discussion the chronology of the early strata of Sangam literature may be placed between the beginning of the 1st Millennium BC or slightly earlier (Late Harappan) and 3rd Century BC – 1st Century AD. Initially the lower time limit was fixed around 3rd Century BC by the historians of yesterday. But the recent archaeological excavations and expeditions conducted throughout the length and breadth of Tamilnadu have pushed back the lower time limit to the beginning of 1st Millennium BC.

The entry of the Aryan customs, rituals and ceremonies and the perculation of Sanskrit words into the Sangam literature (particularly in the Silappathikaram and Manimegalai) would have taken place due to contacts. Therefore the Aryan Culture and Sanskrit literature have nothing to do substantially with the development and progress of Tamil culture and literature.

Tamil language, culture and civilisation are great in their own right: There is no need to climb on the shoulders of any other language or culture to appear greater. This fact is discussed in great detail below:

LINGUISTIC EVIDENCES:

In the course of several thousands of years the Palaeolithic and Neolithic man found the necessity to live in groups isolated from one another. This gave birth to a number of obscure dialects spoken in different parts of India. However, most of them have become extinct when the modern languages began to shape. In ancient South India there existed some living dialects which continue to be spoken and which promoted a mass of literature that helped the earliest grammarians like Agattiyar and Tolkappiyar to formulate their rules and regulations so as to conform to the ordinary class of language. It may be said that all the languages of India could not be traced to one original family of languages and it could not be the Indo-Germanic as was assumed. But they are native to the soil and was born in Neolithic time if not earlier. It may be further said that the growth of languages was indigenous. It is supposed that the ancient Tamil when it became numerically strong could have developed one dialect originally the dialect was uncultivated language and as centuries rolled the dialect became cultivated one. Therefore it is believed that the present Tamil belonged to this linguistic group which has nothing to do with the Indo-Germanic or other families of languages. According to P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar "in the most ancient layers of the Tamil language can be discovered not only ample trace of Neolithic culture but also the birth of the Iron Age culture which succeeded it". (Stone Age in India). Therefore, the Neolithic man (or late Harappan) could have realised the importance and necessity for a speech. That could have been achieved by writing of the pictures of the men and animals. This method of writing is none else than the pictorial writing seen in the pre-historic rock paintings found mostly in the North and North Western districts of Tamil Nadu. (This matter has been discussed in detail later). The picture writing was in vogue for many centuries to portray thoughts and communicate them to others. This status continued till the alphabet was formulated and words and sentences came to be written. Regarding the definition of a dialect it is said that it contains pestiges of the original variety of the language. They were not incorporated when the language was taking shape. Traces of ancient languages are also found in the dialect and folklore. The Folklore, folk art, folk music, and folk drama embody a number of

customers, rituals and ceremonies connected with birth, marriage and death. A deep study of these customs and manners may throw some glimpses of how the original speech was spoken and how ancient man developed his vocabulary and language. The present author has applied this principle to read the pictorial graffiti and ligatured graffiti found on the ancient pottery of the Tamils and the Harappans (It is explained in great details later). Therefore this cruel vocabulary gave birth to a future developed language of the country. In this connection the views of Dr. Caldwell who has taken special interest and some pains to examine the Dravidian languages deserve special mention. According to him verbal roots are capable of being used also as nouns. Nouns cannot be traced to any extant words. On verbal root the Dravidian languages are said to differ from Sanskrit. For instance sol in Tamil as a verb means 'to speak' and as a noun it denotes, 'a word', tari means as a verb 'to chop of' and as a noun 'a stake', muri in Tamil means 'to break into' and as a noun 'a fragment', or 'a bond'. Some Tamil words which are regarded as primitives are derived from roots. For example, viral, 'a finger' from the root viri – 'expand', kadal, the sea and the root seems to be kada which means 'pass beyond', pakal – 'day' from pahu to 'divide'. It may be explained that the name of the object is simply a verbal noun with the significant of a noun of quality. For example nilam in Tamil means 'ground'. It comes from nil to 'stand'. Nadu, any country, from nadu to 'plant'. Vin – ' the sky', from 'Vil 'to be clear'. Kudirai – 'a horse' from Kuthi 'to leap'. In many cases the names of animals need not be imitations of sound they make but are predicative words. The Dravidian groups are originally monosyllabic.

Tamil – Independent of Sanskrit:

Let us examine how Tamil language grew independently of any other languages including Sanskrit. According to Caldwell the Dravidian languages grew and developed independent of Sanskrit. Orientalists, of the last century specialised more and more in Sanskrit and less in Tamil language were of the opinion that Tamil language would have been derived from the Sanskrit Tongue. There may be similarities. But it could not be said that one language was indebted to the other or that one language

was derived from the other. It cannot be forgotten that a language of any country before becoming a modern one, was growing, changing, transforming and borrowing. There may be mutual influences of languages due to contacts of peoples speaking different languages. For example, the language of Samhitas is different from that of the Brahmanas, which is again different from that used in the epics and later literature. Therefore it could not be said that one language Sanskrit as fixed and static. In the same way the Tamil language has to be treated and considered grown independently of Sanskrit.

It is estimated that a majority or atleast Ninety percent of Tamil words were not influenced by the Sanskrit embodied in the Sangam literature. Again the pronouns and the numerals and also their verbal and nominal inflexions coupled with syntactic arrangement of the words they seem to be radically different from Sanskrit. Similarly we cannot trace any Sanskrit derivative in a large majority of words. This consideration could lead us to prounce the impossibility of even a remote affinity between Tamil and Sanskrit. Instead the Dravidian languages particularly Tamil have influenced the Sanskrit and even vedic dialects. (Appendix)

Few examples are cited below:

i. The word Siva used in the Veda is used as an epithet of God Rudra – Siva in Tamil means red white Rudra also means red (Rig veda). Therefore there is a possibility of tracing Rudra – i.e. Siva to the Dravidian thought.

ii. The cereberal letters form an independent element of Tamil phonology. Since Sanskrit has also cereloral letters which are not found in the Indo-European languages (Sanskrit is included in the Indo-European languages), the latter may be indebted to the Dravidian languagaes.

iii. Similarly the consonant l must have influenced the Sanskrit pronounciation of the word. Bishop Caldwell has shown that the change of r to l is quite common on South Indian languages. Regarding their flexional system also one can note some influence of Dravidian languages over Sanskrit. There are also several points of

analogy with Dravidian languages like – conjunctive, participle, spirants etc. It is therefore suggested that the Dravidian influences are far reaching in character and may be held responsible for the transformation into its present form of the original Sanskrit. In the light of foregoing facts and arguments we could not think of or speak of Tamil language being derived from Sanskrit and acknowledge the fact that the South Indian Languages particularly Tamil had an Independent growth and if it came under Sanskrit infleucne it was only in much later times, than we are apt to imagine (pre-Historic South India by V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar).

The Sangams are said to have come to an end prior to the early Pandyas and Pallavas rose to power at Madurai and Kanchipuram respectively. It is well known that the Sangam Poets were well aware of the chronology and output of Sanskrit language and literature. However it is not clear how the contacts were made by the Tamil poets to acquaint themselves with the Sanskrit works.

Regarding the antiquity of Sanskrit, it may be said that it appeared very late on the political areana of ancient India. It is explained as follows: The earliest Sanskrit inscription belonged to Rudradaman (2nd Century AD). From the time of the Mauryas to the time of the early Pallavas the court and popular language of India was Prakrit with regional variations – and as Asokan Prakrit, Maharashtra Prakrit and Andhra Prakrit and not Sanskrit.

The earliest grammarian Panini is said to have lived during the early part of 4th Century B.C. But a mystery surrounds his nativity. It is doubted whether he was a native of India, or he is believed to have belonged to a place Sakalapura (Sialkot) in North Western Frontier territory. The North Western part and Sindh province formed part of Persian Empire. It was treated as a province (20th Satrapy) until the Persian Empire collapsed. If this is correct, then it is inferred that Sanskrit was studied outside India. If this is true, then how that Sanskrit would have influenced the Sangam Poets? or how the Tamil classical language and literature would have received impact from Sanskrit? or how the Sangam poets took to the study of Panimi's grammer? The Tamil poets did not bother to follow the

Aindram school of Sansrkit grammer, and Sanskrit thought, when the other parts of India did not take to Sanskrit during the days of the Mouryas and Pre-Mouriyas times. If at all, if they wanted to study sanskrit they had to travel all the way to Persia or to other seats of learning in Kashmir or Nepal. It is doubtful whether the Sangam poets and the author of Tolkappiam were struck by the style of the Sanskrit grammar and anticipated its popularity and took to his study. (Vedam Venkatraya Sastri B.I. T.C.).

The fall of the Epic Age and the birth of Buddhism and Jainism in the 6th Century B.C. on important epoch in the history of India as they have heralded an era of social justice, economic equality and religious turmoil and unrest. The worst affected were the Sanskrit and Sanskrit scholars. Sanskrit was replaced by Pali and Prakrit languages in the realm of literacy and literature. The period from 600 BC to 100 AD – 100 BC may be considered as the dark period for the Sanskrit and Brahminical Culture.

Buddhist literature in Pali and Jaina literature in Prakrit were brought to focus singing the glory of Buddha and Jaina Tirthangaras. It was the period when Brahmi and Prakrit ruled the entire nation excepting the Tamil country were the Tamil language and classical tamil literature held hegemony during the same period. Though there are some Brahmi inscriptions found in Tamilnadu, they are in Tamil language and not in Prakrit. Similarly the Brahmi inscribed pot sherds are also in Tamil.

When Asoka embraced Buddhism, the latter had attained the status of Royal Religion and had spread its wings to all parts of India and Celon. Asoka is said to have avoided the Sanskrit language and replaced it by Prakrit. All his stone inscriptions and edicts are in the Prakrit language only. However Buddhism had not made deep inroad into the Tamil Country as Prakrit was unacceptable to the Tamils and Tamil poets. Tamil country during the period from 1st Millennium BC to 3rd Century AD witnessed the glorious epoch of Sangams and Sangam classical literary output undaunted by the impact of Prakrit language, even though the bordening Dravidanadus like Andhra have yielded to the Prakrit influences. The earliest literature in the Andhra Pradesh namely the Saptasri of the

Satavahana ruler Hala was written in Prakrit. The book is a biography of Hala. There are several centres of Buddhism and stupas and viharas throughout Andhra Pradesh during the period. But in the Tamil Country Buddhism came a bit late, i.e. after the Christian era and made its way into a few pockets like Puhar and Kanchipuram. There is no reference in the Sangam classics to Buddhism being present in Madurai, which was the seat and citadel of Tamil poets and scholarship.

Therefore, Sanskrit could not have exercised its influence during the period in the Tamil Country. As a result Tamil literature and the Tamil classical language remain unabated and grew uninterrupted during the period.

GRAFITI AS PICTOGRAPHS, LOGOGRAPHS – LIGATURED GRAFFITI.

Graffiti as Pictographs, Logographs:

Bearing the facts dealt with earlier in mind, let us now consider the relevance of graffiti to the emergence of writing in India. An attempt has been made in the following pages to show that some of the graffiti may be identified as Pictographs or Ideographs or Logographs.

Pictographs:

As said earlier, Pictograph is nothing but a picture or actual representation of an object. The earliest form of writing is called Pictograph and the Pictographs are to be considered as recorded gestures

Ideographs:

Another category of Pictography is the ideograph which stands for pictorial symbols and to suggest objects or abstract ideas.

Logograph:

It is a picture of an object or part of an object for a word. the graffiti symbols of sounds may be considered as logographs.

The above mentioned three groups represent the first three stages in the evolution of writing in the ancient world. But in the absence of tangible evidence for the existence of a script, the signs or symbols of these three stages have to be considered as the pro-genitors of a script. The symbols of these three stages have to be convincingly identified in order to trace the existence or formation of a script or any system of writing in the ancient period.

A close and careful examination of the graffiti enabled us to pick up such of those signs or symbols of the three stages.

Decipherment of Pictographs:

Since pictography is the most natural and direct means of communication, it must have originated independently among different people of the various countries and therefore it is impossible to locate or identify a single system of pictography in the ancient world.

The decipherment of pictography needs a thorough knowledge of people and their culture, customs and manners and environmental conditions because the same pictography made by a set of people may have a different significance among others within a country or outside. Therefore it is usually very easy for any one to get a meaning out of a pictograph but at the same it is quite a different matter whether that was the meaning which the scribe or the author intended to convey. Further, the ancient people did not think and write as we think and write today. Bearing this in mind the present author has attempted to identify certain graffiti with the help of the rock paintings.

According to Heras, the pictograph, may broadly be divided into two categories: (1) Natural Pictograph and (2) Conventional Pictograph. The natural pictograph is the pictograph depicting the object. But in the conventional pictograph, the depicted object cannot be seen but after a close examination it may be realised that it is also a real pictograph. Based on this definition and classification of the pictographs, we may proceed to explain such of those graffiti which could be fitted into this frame.

Before entering into discussion, the present author wants to inform that not all the 513 prominent graffiti enumerated by him may be called pictographs. The graffiti include pictographs, Ideographs and Logographs besides other categories as described earlier, because the earlier systems of writing would not be purely pictographic or ideographic or Logographic but mixed. As said earlier, even in Egypt there are three stages in the writing system.

LIGATURED GRAFFITI – SIGNIFICANCE:

The graffiti which occur in pairs or in association with more than one symbol are termed as 'Ligatured Graffiti". They are termed so, for convenience of differentiating the individual or single graffito. Further, these graffiti constitute a class by themselves and offer us much evidence to consider them as a sort of script. Their length varies from two to seven signs. They have been noticed on the potteries of the Pre-Harappan. Harappan, Chalcolithic and the Pre and early Iron age. In majority of the ligatured graffiti the symbols are distributed in a horizontal straight line, like a script. But the size is not uniform in many cases. In some cases the symbols are super imposed and that poses difficulty in identifying the individual symbols. Sometimes different Brahmi like signs are shown super imposed or overlapping and that suggests that the primitive method of writing i.e. the signs which ought to have been shown in a line are superimposed. this is one of the striking characteristic features of the ligatured graffiti. This method of superimposition of signs or letters is not generally noticed in the case of inscribed potsherds. For, the signs in the latter constitute a script which may either be Harappan or Brahmi.

In most cases we notice that the symbols superimposed are different in character and shape. The symbols are shown at various angles and also upside down or simply projecting from the top or bottom or hanging. In a few cases, short or long strokes are added an individual symbol either at its top, middle or at its bottom. The addition of these strokes change the morphology of the basic symbol. But the addition of strokes is generally seen in the case of Brahmi like symbols.

While drawing the symbols, the potter or scribe did not follow any system or method in respect of spacing. It seems that he could have held the vessels at different angles while scratching the signs on them. But the question unanswered is why different signs are superimposed.

There are nearly 753 ligatured graffiti in all collected from various sites. The maximum length of a ligatured graffiti in different cultural context is given below:

3 Signs for the Pre-Harappan

7 Signs for the Harappan

5 Signs for the Chalcolithic eg. Daimabad (Maharashtra)

6 Signs for the Iron age Habitation eg. Arikamedu, Alagarai (Tamilnadu)

5 Signs for the Iron age Burial eg. Nagarjunakonda. (Andhra Pradesh)

The two signed ligatured graffiti predominate in almost all the sites.

Regarding the ligatured graffiti of the Pre-Harappan sites, Brahmi letter like symbols are not uncommon. Further short or long strokes are added to these signs.

Majority of the graffiti from Harappan sites are very similar to the Harappan script on the earthernware vessels. Though they are considered to be the inscribed sherds with Harappoan script, they are included in the present paper for the purpose of comparative study and analysis. It is interesting to note that there are nearly 65 sherds with two signs only. The decipherment of these graffiti will be easier than those of the script or the seals. Therefore a sincere and methodical approach may be attempted to read these two sign inscribed sherds and the reading may be applied to the decipherment of the letters on the seals. It may be also observed that the Indus letter-signs are not accompanied by figures as on the seals in most cases. Therefore these signs have to be identified among the signs on the seals in pair and the reading should be proceeded. There are many symbols in the Ligatured graffiti which have parallels in the graffiti of the Chalcolithic and South Indian Iron age.

Regarding the ligatured graffiti of the Chalcolithic period the same phenomenon i.e. the occurrence of the pair of signs is noticed in the majority of the sherds as noticed in the Harappan period. There are also considerable number of sherds with three signs and a few with five signs. Most of the signs constituting the ligatured graffiti are very similar to those on the Pre-Harappan and the South Indian Iron age graffiti. (Late Harappan).

The Iron age ligatured graffiti from South India out numbered those from Chalcolithic and Harappan sites. In fact these graffiti have ben built of two or more than two symbols. There are a considerable number of them with four or five symbols. In this connection, Sanur, Kodumanal, Tirukkampuliyur, Alagrai, Uraiyur, Karur, Vallam, Arikamedu and Kodumanal may be cited as the typical sites yielding bulk of these graffiti. Majority of the symbols constituting the ligatured graffiti are not new and belong to the same stock to which the Pre-Harappan, Harappan and Calcolithic graffiti belong. It may even be said that the construction of the ligatured graffiti and the morphology of the signs suggest a common source within our country. We could say this because the signs which constitute the ligatured graffiti excluding that of the Harappan present various combinations of Indus signs, Brahmi letter like signs and graffiti.

LIGATURED GRAFFITI SIMILAR TO INDUS SCRIPT FROM SOUTH INDIA:

There are as many as 84 ligatured graffiti which are built of with Indus signs only. Of these 32 reported from Post Harappan and Chalcolithic sites, 52 reported from South Indian sites. Most of the latter carry two or three signs only. These are to be called hereafter "Inscribed sherds of Indus Script" and not as "Ligatured Graffiti". This is for the first time that inscribed sherds of Indus script have been brought to light in south India. These sherds offer various new combinations of Indus signs or texts hitherto not reported from elsewhere. They have now become new additions to the already existing stock of inscribed sherds of Indus script reported from Harappan and other sites like Lothal, Kalibangan and Diamabad. Till now the scholars had held the view that Daimabad is the southern most point where the Indus script was in use. But the present study has pushed its southern boundary upto the Lower Kaveri Basin.

The discovery of these sherds have also dispelled the view of many scholars that Harappan civilisation could not have stretched its arm over South India and Tamil Nadu as the latter was separated from the former by a vast gap of time and space. But the present author has not only exploded their unfounded hypothesis but also has made sincere attempts to read the script using Dravidian etymology. He has also narrowed down the vast time gap. (discussed earlier)

These new combinations of Indus signs on the sherds, particularly those with two and three signs would be easier to identify and read as they have been found in the land of the Dravidians (Particularly Tamil Nadu). The language of this script should be none else than the Proto-Dravidian or even Tamil. Hence, the decipherers need not have any hesitation to apply the proto-Dravidian language to interpret the script. Hitherto, the main objection especially voiced by S.R. Rao to apply the Proto-Dravidian language to read the Indus script lies in the fact that such of those decipherers who had attempted to read them in the Proto-Dravidian language, did so on the assumption that the script had a Dravidian Origin. The present author has now produced a concrete evidence to overrule the objection raised by S.R. Rao and he hopes that the Dravidian origin of the Indus script would now be welcomed by the decipherers also who have been arguing for and against the theory of the Dravidian Origin. The graffitology of South India has now proved its credentials to enact a major role in the drama of decipherment of the Indus script. The present work will certainly help the decipherers to initiate a fresh dialogue to accelerate the process of decipherment of the script to install the same in the galaxy of archaic scripts of the Ancient World.

CULTUREWISE DISTRIBUTION AND FREQUENCY:

The total number of ligatured graffiti collected is 768. Out of these, omitting the ligatured graffiti from Pre-Harappan and Harappan periods, we get the total number of ligatured graffiti as 605. the culturewise distribution and their percentage are given below:

	Ligatured Graffiti	Percentage
Chalcolithic Habitation	80	15%
Chalcolithic Burial	6	1%
Iron Age Habitation	398	66%
Iron Age Burial	121	20%
Total	**605**	

The above analysis shows that the bulk of the ligatured graffiti come from South Indian Iron age sites i.e. a total of 519. The graffiti tradition seems to have slowly and steadily taken the form of an inscription or script or pictographic or phonographic nature. This phenomenon which emerged in the Chalcolithic period, reached a matured status in the South India Iron age culture complex. Therefore this sort of ligatured graffiti seems to have served the purpose of a script during the period or assumed the role of the script.

A careful examination of the sign or symbol combination of the ligatured graffiti of both Chalcolithic and South Indian Iron age reveal interesting points hitherto unknown amd unnoticed.

These ligatured graffiti are built of signs or symbols of different combination such as (1) Indus signs alone, (2) Indus signs plus graffiti (3) Brahmi plus graffiti, (4) Indus sign plus Brahmi plus graffiti and (5) pure graffiti marks or pictographs.

CHALCOLITHIC PERIOD:

The late Harappan signs or the degenerated Harappan signs were picked upto to build these ligatured graffiti in the Chalcolithic period. These graffiti are not the same as those of the graffiti (inscribed sherds of Indus script reported from Lothal and Kalibangan). They are not included among the Indus signs on the seals or not placed on par with the Indus signs on the seals by the excavators themselves. They were left untouched. These graffiti are to be considered as constituting the late

Harappan script. S.R. Rao himself has not taken up these ligatured graffiti very seriously, though he has paid more attention to single graffiti representing Indus signs. Therefore this group of graffiti has now to be added to the already existing inscriptions of Indus signs.

The ligatured graffiti with a combination of Indus signs, Brahmi letter like signs besides graffiti marks are not many, but the appearance of Brahmi like signs in the ligatured graffiti of this period tends to suggest the trend that a new script was on the card i.e. the Proto-Brahmi script but this has not yet taken shape as suggested by the statistical data shown.

The ligatured graffiti with pure graffiti marks dominated the scene as there are nearly 46 such graffiti out of a total of 86.

The ligatured graffiti from the habitation sites out numbered those of the burials. This again confirms our conclusion that the graffiti were something more than mere symbols.

The superimposed symbols or signs in the ligatured graffiti suggest the process of disintegration or decline of the Indus script and at the same time they show that the Pre-Iron age people were on the threshold of moulding or shaping a new script based on the formation of the Indus script or combination of Indus signs, Brahmi like signs and graffiti marks.

SOUTH INDIAN IRON AGE: (TAMIL NADU).

Here again we notice the repetition of the same trend but with more vigour i.e. the ligatured graffiti from the habitation sites outnumbered those from the burials.

The Indus signs on the ligatured graffiti from Tamil Nadu appear as Late Harappan or mature or even degenerated Harappan signs. As said earlier, the location of the graffiti has now confirmed our hypothesis that the Iron Age people of Tamil Nadu were none else than the Harappans.

Again the ligatured graffiti with the combination of Brahmi like signs and graffiti marks are on the increase. They show that the Indus script was slowly giving way to the formation of a new script i.e. Proto Brahmi or proto Tamil as said earlier.

As in the Chalcolithic period the ligatured graffiti with pure graffiti marks constitute the bulk; this suggests again that the graffiti was serving the purpose of a script either in the form of a pictograph or ideograph or monogram or a combination of all the three prior to the formation of the Proto-Brahmi script. This is not very clear and this aspect of the ligatured graffiti has to be subjected to close examination. However, the present author has made attempts to read some of them from among all the above mentioned categories, with proper Dravidian etymology at the end of this Chapter.

DIRECTION OF WRITING:

The ligatured graffiti with Indus signs (Inscribed sherds of Indus script) as well as with pure graffiti marks are read from right to left. But the ligatured with other combination of signs are read from right to left or Vice Versa depending upon the context rendering sensible meaning. There are only a few sherds with signs clearly drawn overriding. This overriding factor sends some clues to establish that the direction of writing of the ligatured graffiti was from right to left. For instance in one specimen, the left sign overrides the right sign. (Plate 5) This is clearly visible in another specimen also. These two are the best examples for the ligatured graffiti with pure graffiti marks.

VALUES:

The values for the signs supplied is based on the roots of the signs derived from the rock paintings. However, for the Brahmi like signs, the value of the corresponding Brahmi letters is supplied assuming that such of those ligatured graffiti as Proto-Brahmi characters yielding place to the Brahmi script later. This methodology for identifying the direction of writing and values and meaning of the graffiti has been uniformly adopted throughout.

An attempt to decipher certain prominent ligatured graffiti has been made and their value and meaning derived. (Figures)

LANGUAGE AND AUTHORS OF THE GRAFFITI:

The identification or reading of the graffiti in the foregoing pages has been purely based on the assumption that the pictographs or logographs among the graffiti represent the Dravidian language of the bygone days or the language of the non-Aryan, Proto-Dravidians of India. The Tamil words chosen for reading the symbols need not necessarily be of Proto-Dravidian origin but may be a mixture of the Dravidian language of the Sangam and the Pre-Sangam age because of the fact that some of the signs have been read with the help of the Tamil words in vogue during the Sangam period also. Even the Tamil words and numerals of the medieval period have been chosen to read them.

The factors which weighted in favour of this reading are as follows:

1. Of the total of 3056 graffiti, more than 60% i.e. 2195 have been reported from the Iron age burials and habitation sites of South India i.e. Dravidian land. Even among the 60% - 1613 are from Tamil Nadu only.

2. Even the Chalcolithic graffiti which account for nearly 20% of the graffiti i.e. 548 have come down form sites mostly situated in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan regions lying south and south west of Narmada River. We may not be far wrong if we include these regions also with south India or Dravida Nadu of the Sangam and pre sangam days (discussed earlier). This is further strengthened by the striking similarly of graffiti and the black and red were tradition of these two regions. the similarly of the Pre-Harappan, Non-Aryan graffiti and South Indian graffiti lends additional proof to this argument.

3. Majority of the Indus signs not excluding their variants as many as 120 have their parallels in South Indian graffiti which bring the cultures of these two regions to a close proximity inspite of the fact that they are separated by a vast gap of distance and time. As said earlier the gap may be narrowed down to a considerable degree. The signs of the Indus script are reflected on the potery of the

Dravidians i.e. the most fascinating and intellectual aspect of the Harappan culture is traceable in the graffiti tradition of South India. Conversely it may be said that the Harappan script reflects the Dravidian characters embedded in the graffiti marks. For instance, the fish sign which is common to the Indus script has also a very high frequency in the graffiti. (Plate 6) They occur 58 times. The fish is known as min in Tamil and the Indus territory was once known as (Minadu) meaning "Land of Fishes". It is also believed that Vyasa, the author of Mahabharatha was said to be the son of a Matsya (Minavary). The Sangam work Purananuru makes a pointed reference to a Chera King Perun Cheralathan who was said to have fed the army of both the Pandavas and Kauravas in the Mahabharatha war. this indicates the Chera King's association in one way or other with the incident of the Mahabharatha war. This is yet another proof which not only strengthens the view of the Dravidian origin for the author of Mahabharatha, but also justifies the naming of the Indus territory as 'Minadu'.

Heras as once observed that the Mohenjadaro civilisation was not a civilisation rerstricted to the Indus Valley. It was a civilisation that extended all over India and eventeually we should find relics of this civilisation similar to those of Mohenjodaro all over Indian Sub-Continent. Heras prediction has become true as the relics of the Indus Valley civilisation have been noticed well beyond the boundaries of the Indus basin touching Tamil Nadu and right upto Ceylon as enumerated in the earlier chapters.

Hall has gone ahead by one step and observed that "the culture of India is Pre-Aryan in origin and as in Greece, the conquered civilised the conqueror".

The inscribed sherds with purely. Indus signs from a number of Pre-Iron and Iron age sites in South India particularly in Tamil Nadu bear testimony to this hypothesis. These inscribed sherds lead us to go a step further to pronounce that the Tamils are none else than those who occupied the Indus Valley region and the language of the latter ought to have been Tamil, the oldest of all languages of South India.

It is worth recalling here the observations of Zvelebil to strengthen further the argument of the Dravidian Origin of the Indus script and their impact on the writing system of the Dravidians. He observes that "there must have been sometime in the fourth to third millennium B.c. a common centre of diffusion, a strip of land extending possibly from eastern Africa or southern Arabia through the Persian Gulf to North Eastern Iran of the Black and Red ware folk of the Proto-Dravidians and that the South Indian incisions (Graffiti) may be remains of writing which the Dravidians brought with them in a degenerate, impoverished and fragmentary form from the large cities of the Harappan Civilisation.

4. Long ago Heras, recently Parpola, Mahadevan and others have made attempts to read the Indus signs with the help of the Proto-Dravidian etymology. The sustained and painstaking researches of these scholars and their convincing arguments to identify the Harappans as the Dravidan have tempted the present author to take a dip into the ocean of their arguments and come out with tremendous enthusiasm and remarkable confidence to follow their foot steps to the vexed problem of reading the graffiti as done in the foregoing pages.

Besides graffiti tradition, the recent excavations in South India more particularly in Tamil Nadu have blessed us with enough material evidence in our endeavour to identify the cultural traits of both regions.

The following are the clues picked up from the study of the archaeological finds from recent excavations conducted in Tamil Nadu which recall the traits of the Indus Valley culture. The clues are in the form of certain antiquities and structural remains which are common to the Harappa culture and the Iron age culture of South India. They are as follows:

5. a. As said earlier, the Urn Burial is as old as the Neolithic period in South India. Urns with graffiti marks form part of the Iron age culture. They even serve as criteria to distinguish the South Indian Iron age burials. Urn burials were also practiced by the Harappans. These urns also bear graffiti. Secondly,pit burial with

grave goods and stone appendage was also not unknown to them. The excavations at the Harappan site Surkotada in Kutch have revealed this information. Grave goods in the form of small pots and vessels have been collected. But no iron was found. (In South Indian Megalithic burials these grave goods are a common feature).

b. Black-and-red ware is the chief ceramic industry of the Iron age communities in the South. This pottery has been collected from Harappan sites like Lothal, Rupar, Amri etc. In these sites the pottery forms part of the cultural complex of the Harappans.

c. There are certain pottery shapes common to both cultures. They are (1) multiple pot (found at Uraiyur and Nilgiri megalithic burials), (2) dish-on-stand, ring stand and incense burner (found at Tirukkampuliyur and in megalithic burials all over the South) (3) spouted bowl, the spout being luted at the bottom (found at Korkai) and (4) a few more shapes like shallow bowls, trays, lota etc. collected, from the Adichchanallur burials by Anglade and others.

d. Ring wells were used in both regions – particularly in Kanchipuram there are hundreds of such ring wells buried in the river beds and on the banks of the Vegavati river on which the city was raised.

e. The Harappans knew the use of horse as evidenced from Surkotada excavations. The Iron age people of South India also used horses as seen from the rock paintings as well as from the horse bits collected from their burials. Besides, the Sangam literature contain references to the import of horses.

f. (Pointed out earlier) The structural remains of the Harappans exhibit a variety of bricks which are of massive size measuring 39 cm. x 19 cm. x 7 cm. Such bricks were also used in Tamil Nadu as evidenced from the excavations at Kanchipuram and Vasavasamudram. These bricks were used in the construction of a Buddhist structure at Kanchipuram datable to 3rd Century BC

g. The numerous bronze objects found at Adichchanallur and Kodumanal indicate the high proficiency they attained in the field of bronze casting. The Harappans also possessed remarkable degree of proficiency in the field. Bronze is a rare object in other sites in the south. It is due to the fact that bronze was very scarce in South India.

h. The study of the skulls of the Harappans and of the Neolithic and Iron age people of south India is still in its infant stage. But one thing is certain. Among the Harappans, there were different ethnic groups or races like Mediterranean, Proto-Australoid etc., as suggested by a recent study of the skulls from the Harappan sites. The Mediterranean stock seems to ocur among the Kallars of South India. The Proto-Australoid characters may be seen in the jungle folk of South India like Kadars, Kurumbars etc. Further, the study of the Adichchanallur skulls has revealed that they belong to the Dravidian stock. It may be mentioned that much cannot be said about the racial groups pertaining to these two cultures, as very little has been done in this direction. We cannot say anything boldly as it requires a sound knowledge of physical anthropology. For the present, it will suffice if we could say that the ethnological studies bring certain ethnic groups among the Harappans very close to the Dravidians.

i. It has been reported by Sankalia that one of the terracotta dancing figures 3" high from Harappa bears resemblance to our South Indian Nataraja of Cola period. this needs further study.

6. The theory of evolution of Brahmi from the Indus script was pronounced by Hunter and his hypothesis has been receiving greater attention at the hands of Modern scholars like K.V. Soundararajan and a host of others. This theory is not rejected altogether and still alive and awaits confirmation depending upon the fresh discoveries. It has also been shown earlier, how the Indus script would have influenced the formation of Brahmi script by transmitting certain select signs through the graffiti tradition.

The Maharaja Kadai painted letters as well as those from a number of sites in Tamilnadu though appear to be like Brahmi are to be classified as graffiti consisting of Indus signs, Brahmi like letters and graffiti marks. As said earlier these letters are in the transition stage from the Indus sign-cum-Brahmi-cum graffiti characters i.e. the Proto-Brahmi to Brahmi.

7. It may also be mentioned here that the Ceylon seal (from Annaikkottai) with Brahmi letters and the two Harappan signs is yet another evidence to the perculation of the Harappan signs into the writing system of the Tamils, who are said to have established their settlements in Ceylon in the beginning of the 1st Millennium BC.

8. Last but not the least is the find of ligatured graffiti in South India, more particularly in Tamil Nadu which are reminiscent of the inscribed sherds of the Harappans reported from Harappan sites like Harappa, Lothal, Kalibangan and so on and so forth.

These ligatured graffiti will certainly set in motion the wheel of the theory of Dravidian Origin of the Indus script.

Long before our era, Moris Courtillier pronounced that "The Dravidians enjoyed a culture of their own and their commercial relations with the west, Mesapotamia and Egypt which had begun in the very early days continued down to the disruption of the last forces of the Roman Empire". The wider distribution of the black and red ware tradition, the presence of the Hawk-Beaked figure (Plate 7) in the rock paintings of Kilvalai and Dharmapuri, the occurrence of numerous common graffiti, the pottery head rest in the megalithic levels and the find of thousands of Roman coins in South India more particularly in Tamil Nadu bear testimony to the observations of Moris Courtillier. Therefore it seems that South India more particularly Tamil Nadu played a key role in that early complex culture which shaped the civilised world before the advent of the Greeks. As said earlier and according to our study it may be said that Tamil Nadu must have been one of the earliest centres of Human Civilisation.

APPENDIX.

TAMIL WORDS IN SANSKRIT.

Tamil **Sanskrit**

«õÁ¡ (Á¡ =À¡) : «õÀ¡
Å¡ì¸¢Âõ (Å¡ö + Ì = Å¡ìÌ + þÂõ) : Å¡ìÂõ

ÀÆõ (Æ¸Ãõ þøÄ¡¾¾¡ø Ä¸Ãõ ÀÄõ : ÀÄõ
ÀÂýÀðÎûÇÐ)
þÄìÌ : Ä‡¢Âõ
¯î°õ (¯î°¢) : ¯î°¡
¬¨½ (ãÄõ ¬ñ) : ¬ì»¡
¿¡ðÊÂõ (ãÄõ ¿¼) : ¿¡ðÂ
Óò¾¢¨Ã (ãÄõ ÓòÐ - ´ò¾¢, ±Î) : ÓòÃ¡
¾õÀõ (¸õÀõ) : Š¾õÀ¡
°¢ýÉõ (¦ÀÃ¢Â ¯õÅò¾¢ý °¢Ú ÅÊÅõ) : °¢‹Éõ

ÀÊ : Àð, Àò

Å¡¾õ, Å¡Ð : Å¡¾, Å¡Ð
ÀÎ¾ø (¸£ú) : À§¼¡
¿¢Ó¾¢ : ¿¢Ó
¸¡¸õ, ¸¡ì¸¡ (¸¡¸¡ ±ýÚ ÍÆÚÅ¾¡ø) : ¸¡¸¡‹

§¸¡¸¢Äõ : §¸¡¸¢Ä

¸Õî°¨É (ãÄõ ¸¨Ã) : ¸÷ˆ
À¡¾õ (Å¢¨Éî ¦°¡ø À¾¢) : À¡¾‹.
¸Ãõ : ¸Ã‹
Ó¸õ (Ó¸ôÒ + ÓýÒÈõ) : Ó‹

¾Ó¾õ (ãÄõ ¾ñÎ + «õ , Àø : ¾Ó¾‹
¿¸õ : ¿¸‹
(¿Å)Á½¢ : Á½¢
þÃÅ¢ (¾¡ý Á¨ÈÓÐ þÃ¨Åò : ÃÅ¢
¾ÕÀÅÛõ ÝÃ¢Â§É)
ÓÉ¢ (Å÷) : ÓÉ¢†

¾Ã (ãÄõ ¾¡, ¾Õ)	:	¾Õ<
°¡Ð	:	°¡Ð<
(Å¡ö) Å¡Ô	:	Å¡Ô<
þî¨°	:	þî°¡
¸¨¾ (ãÄõ ¸òÐ)	:	¸¾¡
¸¨Ä	:	¸Ä¡
§¾Å¨¾ (§¾ù + «ò¨¾=¦¾öÅô¦Àñ)	:	§¾Å¾¡
À¡Ã¢¨Â (À¡÷=Å£Î, ³¨Â=¦Àñ=Á¨ÉÅ¢)	:	À¡÷Â¡
Á¾¢ (¿¢Ä¡)	:	Á¾¢<
Ð¾¢ (Š ´ðÎ)	:	ŠÐ¾¢
¿¾¢ (¿ò¾ò¾¢ø ¯ÕÅ¡Ìõ ¬üÚìÌ	:	¿¾¢

APPENDIX

CHART SHOWING THE BEGINNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILISATION IN TAMILNADU.

Period	Place	Antiquities	Discoveries and Life
2,00,000 years ago	Vadamadurai, Attirampakkam	Stone Hand axes	Man as nomad
75,000 – 50,000 BC	Attirampakkam	Small Hand axes and blade tools	Man as nomad
40,000 – 20,000 BC	Attirampakkam	Small stone tools like scrappers, cleavers, points etc.	Man as nomad
8,000 – 2,000 BC	Sawyerpuram	Microliths of semi precious stones	Man started realising the value of life
2,000 – 1,000 BC	Paiyampalli, Appukkallu Kandiyur	Celt with Indus letters	Cultivation, pottery etc. were invented. Man became civilised.
1,400 BC – 200 AD.	Adichchanallur, Sanur, Amirthamangalam, Paiyampalli, Korkai, Tirukkampuliyur, Uraiyur, Kanchipuram, Arikamedu, Vallam, Kadumanal, Vasavasamudram .	Iron copper objects Bronze, Shell bangles etc	Sangam Age – Leadership, literature, language, coins and currency developed

¿¾¢ ±ýÚ ¦ÀÂ÷)

§¾Åý : §¾ù

§¾Å¢ (ãÄõ , ¾£ = ´Ç¢) : §¾Å¢

¾¡Éõ (ãÄõ ¾¡ = ¦.¡Î) : ¾¡Éõ

APPENDIX

CARBON 14 DATES.

S.No	Site	:	Date
1.	Pre-Harappan	:	4000 – 3500 BC
2.	Harappan	:	2300 – 1750 BC
3.	Mohanjodaro		
4.	Lothal	:	1750 – 1500 BC
5.	Kalibangan		
6.	Adichchanallur	:	1570 BC
7.	Appukkallu	:	300 BC

8.	Korkai	:	785 BC
9.	Kanchipuram	:	480 BC
10.	Puhar	:	(316 + 103 BC)

ABBREVIATIONS

KDL	:	Kodumanal
LTL	:	Lothal
TKP	:	Tirukkampuliyur
URY	:	Uraiyur
VLM	:	Vallam
AKM	:	Arikamedu
HM	:	Hyderabad Museum
PONDY	:	Puducheri
KRK	:	Korkai
KMEDU	:	Kambar medu
ALG	:	Alagarai
S.DURGA	:	Sravana Durga (Mysore)
RNR	:	Rangpur
DBAD	:	Daimabad
BALU	:	Baluchistan
TNR	:	T Narsipur

PRR	:	Coimbatore
VLM	:	Vallam
GMM	:	Govt. Museum

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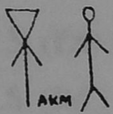
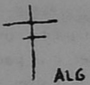
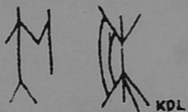
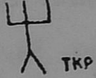
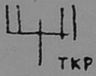
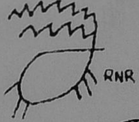
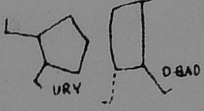
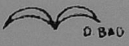
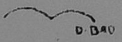
According to many scholars, the question whether there was any pictographic or ideographic script that preceeded the evolution of true writing in India has not found a good answer. It is partially due to the dearth of material evidence on the subject and mostly due to the indeterminate character of most of the material available with regard to their chronology and place in the evolution of writing in India. But the answer to the question has now been found in the graffiti as shown below.

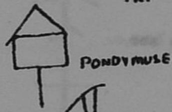
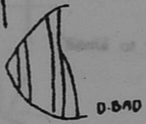
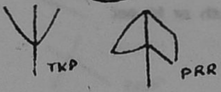
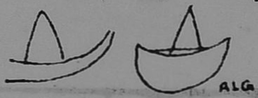
GRAFFITI - NATURAL PICTOGRAPHS :

As said earlier, among the graffiti the following may be identified as Natural Pictographs. The graffiti, their description, values and meaning are tabulated and given below.

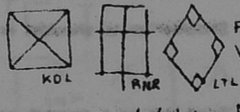
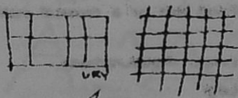
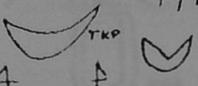
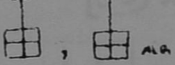
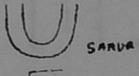
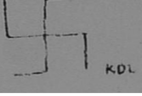
THE FOLLOWING MAY BE IDENTIFIED AS NATURAL PICTOGRAPHS.
THE GRAFFITI, THEIR DESCRIPTION, VALUE AND MEANING ARE TABULATED & GIVEN BELOW.

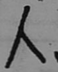
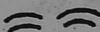
Sl. No.	Pictographs	Description	Value	Meaning
1	2	3	4	5
1		Simple and stylised Human Figure	[illegible]	Man

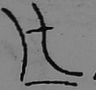
1	2	3	4	5
2.	 AKM	Man or Headman or Superman	Thalai Āļ or Kaḍavul	Chief man - Chieftain or God
3.	BALU	Figure with four arms	Kaḍavul	God
4.	 ALG	Man playing the drum	Parean	Drummer
5	 KDL	Man holding a bow or Vēl or Shaft	Villāi Villālan or Vēlan or Kōlan	Hunter or Archer or Chief
6.	 TKP	Man praying	Tuthi	To pray
7.	 TKP	Man lifting something	Tukkan	Lifter
8	 RNR	Ram	Ēdu or Āḍu	Ram
9	 URY D-BAD	Crab	Naṇḍu	Crab
10.	 D-BAD	Bird	Parava	Bird
11	 D-BAD	Bird flying	Parava	To fly
12.	KDL	Tree with Branches	Maram	Tree

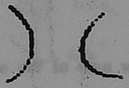
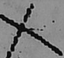
1	2	3	4	5
13.		Flower	Alar	Flower
14.		Mala or Mountain	Mala	Mountain
15.		House	Ir or Il	House or hut
16.		Harp	Yál	Harp
17.		Trident	Vēl	Trident
18.		Boat	Ōḍa	Boat

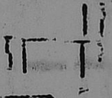
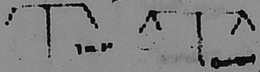
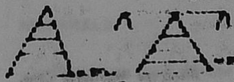
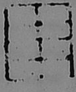
CONVENTIONAL PICTOGRAPHS : OR IDEOGRAPHS :

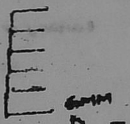
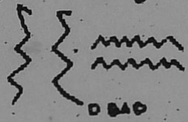
Sl No	Pictographs	Description	Value	
1	2	3	4	
1		Four houses within an enclosure-Village or town	Hāl, Vid Ur or Palli or Pali	Four houses or Village or City
2.		Nilam	Field - Paddy field	
3		Velli or Pirai - Nila or Nila	Moon - Crescent Moon	
4		Kodi or (Kōchi Nilai)	Flag or Sun	
		Tuthi or Tuthikkai Yanai or Yānai or Elephant	To pray or Elephant	
		Nalam	Prosperity	

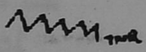
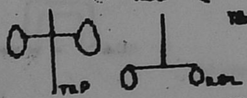
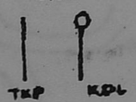
1	2	3	4
7	 MLM	Naḍa	Walk
8.	TKP	Tāndu	To jump
9.	PRR	Oḍu	To run
10.	 MMNT	Kaṇ	Eye or to see
11	PRR	Naṣa	Nose or to smell
12	MPM	Vāy	Mouth or to eat

1	2	3	4
13	TNR	Kāḍu	Ear or to hear
14	GPM	Pādam or Okpātham	Foot - Sacred foot
15	TKP	Tōl or Tula	Shoulder or to shoulder or Balance
16	URJ	Muzhanka or Muzha or	Fore arm or a musical instrument Linear measurement
17	 ALG	Kāl	Leg
18	TKP	Uḍal	Torso

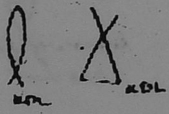
1	2	3	4
19	[illegible]	[illegible]	Damaru
20	 [illegible]	[illegible]	Waist
21	[illegible]	Mugam	Face
22	TRP	[illegible] or [illegible]	Body
23	[illegible]	[illegible] or [illegible]	[illegible] or Knee
24	 TRP	[illegible] or Rod	[illegible] or Pectoral [illegible]

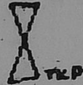
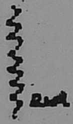
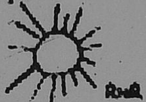
1	2	3	4
25	[illegible]	[illegible]	Animal
26	 [illegible]	[illegible]	Chair
27	 [illegible]	[illegible] or [illegible]	[illegible] or scale
28	 [illegible]	[illegible]	Temple
29	[illegible]	[illegible] or [illegible]	Tank or water Trough
30	 [illegible]	[illegible] or [illegible]	[illegible]

1	2	3	4
31		Kāvaḍi	An offering to Lord Muruga
32		Ari or arivāl	Hail, to cut Harvest
33		al Vāl or Pagal	Sun or path of the sun or day time
34		Uyarāl or Pagal	Rising sun High sun or day time
35		Sīppu or Vāru	Comb or To Comb
36		Ār	River

1	2	3	4
37		Nīr	Water
38		Nīr malai	Mountain with water
39		Tēr	Chariot
40		Kōl or Onṛu	Rod or Numeral One

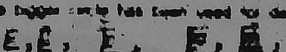
.OGOGRAPHS

		Mīn	Star

1	2	3	4
2		[illegible]	[illegible]
3		[illegible]	[illegible]
4		[illegible]	[illegible]
5		[illegible]	A linear measurement A musical instrument
6		[illegible]	[illegible]
7		[illegible]	Sun or path of the sun in day

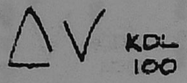
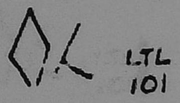
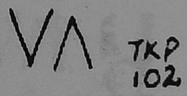
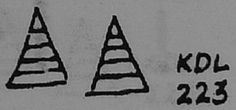
1	2	3	4
8		[illegible]	Rising sun, high sun or day
9		[illegible]	Head

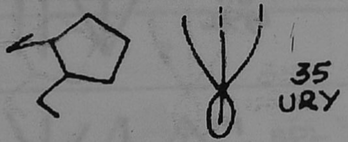
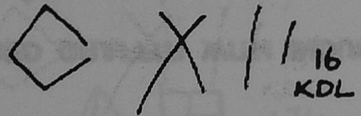
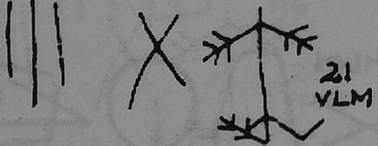
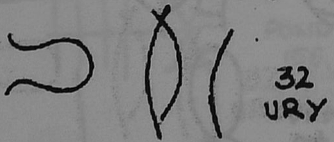
NUMERALS

There are good number of sherds bearing the numeral signs, singly or in association with other signs. The vertical strokes with varying lengths are the commonly noticed numeral signs. A single vertical stroke is assigned a numerical value of one. It occurs alone or in series upto nine only. The number ten is not denoted by the series of vertical strokes but by a small circle. Most of the numeral signs of the Indus script are found in the graffiti also. But the sign composed of short arms occurs as a numeral sign in South Indian graffiti. This symbol is conspicuous by its absence among the Indus signs. The small circle is assigned the numerical value of ten in the Indus and the foreign scripts. But in the graffiti tradition it may be assigned the value of [illegible], as the small circle has been used for number ten. The bigger circle has been used for denoting number [illegible]. As in the case of other scripts the numeral signs such as  etc. are always [illegible] other symbols also.

DECIPHERMENT

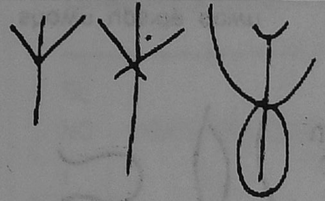
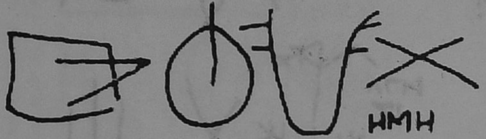
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH INDUS SIGNS ALONE :

SL. NO.	LIGATURED GRAFFITI	VALUE	MEANING	DIRECTION
1	2	3	4	5
1.		Paravai il	Paravai il=Nest	Right to left
2.		Paravai Ūr	Paravaiyūr Village Name	-do-
3		Iru Paravai	Two birds	-do-
4.		Iru Koyil	Two temples	-do-

1	2	3	4	5
5.		Ko naṇḍaṉ	Name of a person or King	Right to Left
6.		Iru Mīn Ūr	Iru Mīnūr-Village Name	-do-
7.		Ōdu Mīn Mūnru	Three stars running or Three running stars	-do-
8.		İnthu Min Maṇḍai[2] or İnthu Mīn Kalam	Five fish pots or five fishing boats	-do-

1* shown upside down

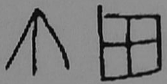
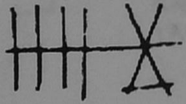
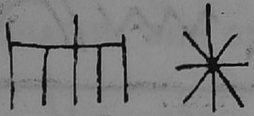
2* The term **Mīn Sorinda Maṇḍai** for a vessel is mentioned in **Sangam Work - Kuruntogai - 1694.**

1	2	3	4	5
9.	 84 AKM	Kaḍavul Vēl Vēl Kaḍavul Iru Vēl or Kō Iruvēl=God	God Vēl Vēl-Lord Muruga (Associated with Vēl) or King Iruvēl (Name of the Ruler)	Right to Left
10.	 HMH	Min Mandai – Pathinon Paravai ụr	Fish pot eleven Paravaiyur (Village name)	-do-

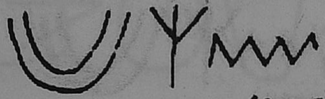
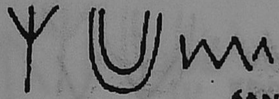
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH INDUS SIGNS AND GRAFFITI

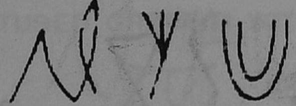
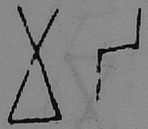
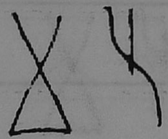
11.	KDL 111	Ōr Mala	A Mountain	-do-
12.	TKG 112	Mala Iru (Eru) Iru mala (Eru)	Climb a top of a hill Two mountains	-do- Left to right

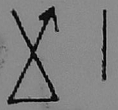
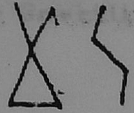
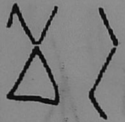
*Shown upside down

1	2	3	4	5
13.	KDL 113	Mala il	Mala il-Mountain House=Cave	Right to left
14.	 LTL 116	Mala Ūr or Ūr mala	Malaiyūr=Village name or Mountain in the village	Left to right or right to left
15. •	 PONDY 155	Nāngu Talailāl or Nāngu Talayon	Four headed man ie. Brahma.	Left to right
16.	 59 KDL TKP	Tūkkan tūkku	Trader's balance Tukkan (Trader)	Right to left

• Shown Upside down

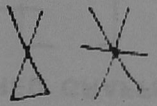
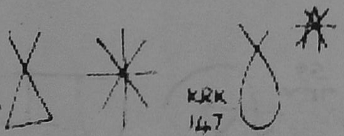
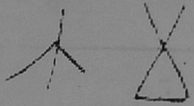
1	2	3	4	5
17.	SANUR 57	Vēl mala tuti	Worship the Vel Mountain	Right to left
18.	 SANUR 58	Mala Vēl tuti	Worship the Mountain Vel	-do-
19.	 SANUR 59	Mala tuti Vēl	Same as above but signs positioning reversed	-do-
20.	SANUR	Tuti Vēl mala	-do-	-do-

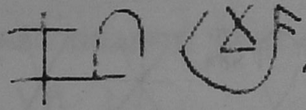
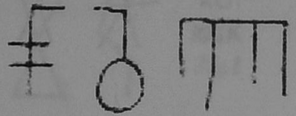
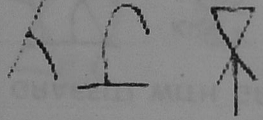
1	2	3	4	5
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH INDUS SIGNS AND GRAFFITI :				
21	 27 S.ANUR	Tuti Vēl mala	Worship the Vēl mountain; same as in 20 but signs reversed	Right to left
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH INDUS SIGNS AND BRAHMI :				
22.	 KRK 139	Ōdu Mīn or Mūnru Mīn	Running star Three star	-do-
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH GRAFFITI AND BRAHMI :				
23.	 KRK 138	Nān Mīn	Four stars	-do-

1	2	3	4	5
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH GRAFFITI AND BRAHMI :				
24.	 KDL 140	Oru Mīn (direction is indicated by arrow)	A Star	Right to Left
25.	 KRK 141	Mūnru Mīn	Three stars	-do-
26.	 KRK 142	Same as above	-do-	-do-
27.	KRK 143	Ōdu Min or Mūnru Mīn	Running star or Three stars	-do-

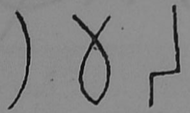
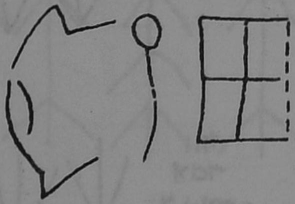
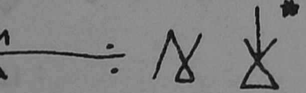
1	2	3	4	5

LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH GRAFFITI AND BRAHMI :

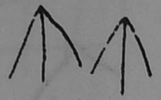
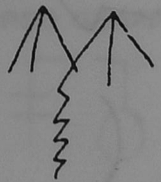
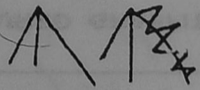
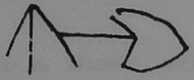
28.	KRK 144	Ōḍu Mīn	Running star	Left to right
29.	 KRK KDL 145	Aṟu Mīn	Six stars	Right to left
30.	KDL 148  KRK 147	Eṇ Mīn	Eight stars	-do-
31	 KDL 146	Mīn āl Para Mīn or Flying star	Name of a woman Flying Star or Falling Star (Comet)	-do- Left to Right

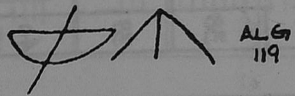
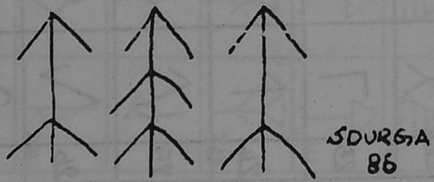
1	2	3	4	5
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH GRAFFITI AND BRAHMI :				
32	 KDL 65	Min maṇḍai (Min Maṇḍalam) il āḷ (Illaḷ)	Min Mandalam or Orbit of stars * House wife (to be taken as two parts)	Right to left
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH INDUS SIGN, GRAFFITI AND BRAHMI COMBINATION :				
33	 KDL 66	Nānku Iru pattu āḷ=80 āḷ	80 men	-do-
34	 KDL 67	Kōn na(n) tha(n) Nata na Kon or (Nattana rājan= (Na)tarājan	Kona(n) tha(n) Name of a person or King or Natarāja (Lord of Dance)	Left to right

* Maṇḍai is shown with min inside. Therefore Maṇḍai here may be read as Mandalam

1	2	3	4	5
LIGATURED GRAFFITI WITH INDUS SIGNS, GRAFFITI AND BRAHMI COMBINATION :				
35.	 31 KARUR	Ōdu Mīn inthu	Five running Stars	Right to Left
36.	 25 KDL	Ūr kō naṇḍan	Konaṇḍan of the Village=Chieftain of the Village	-do-
37.	SLM 88a 	Kōn āḍaṇ-(?) =Konḍaṇ (?)	Chieftain of Kōnāḍu	-do-

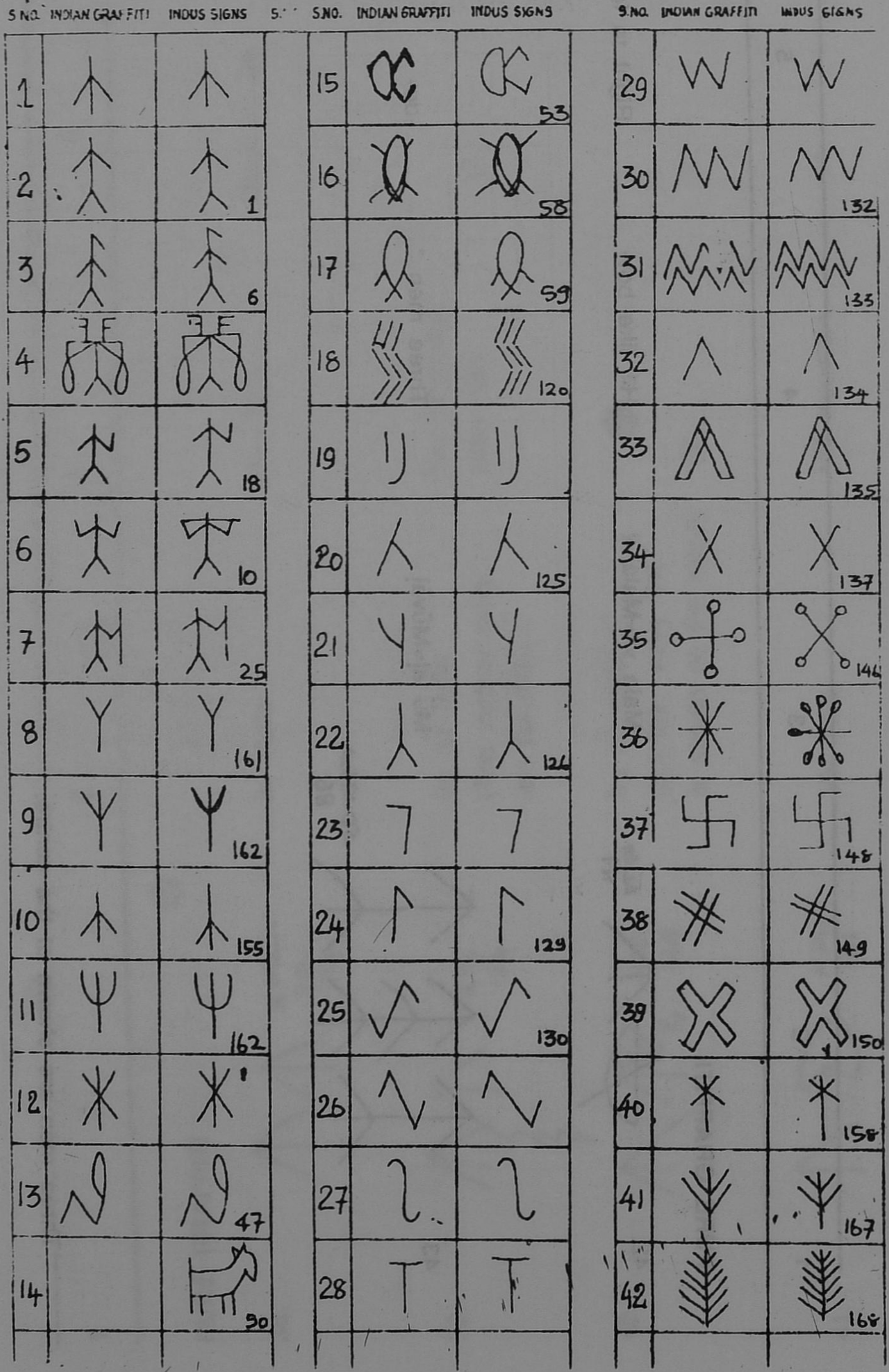
* Stands for āḍan also, as the same is shown in the Rock Paintings for āḍan (dancer)

1	2	3	4	5
PURE GRAFFITI :				
38.	 K MEDU KDL 114	Iru mala	Two hills	Right to left
39.	 KDL 124	Iru nīr mala (The vertical wavy line for nīr)	Two hills with water falls	-do-
40.	 KDL 125	Iru nīr malai (but the wavy line is shown on the slope)	-do-	-do-
41.	 KDL 131	Vēl mala	Vēl mountain	-do-

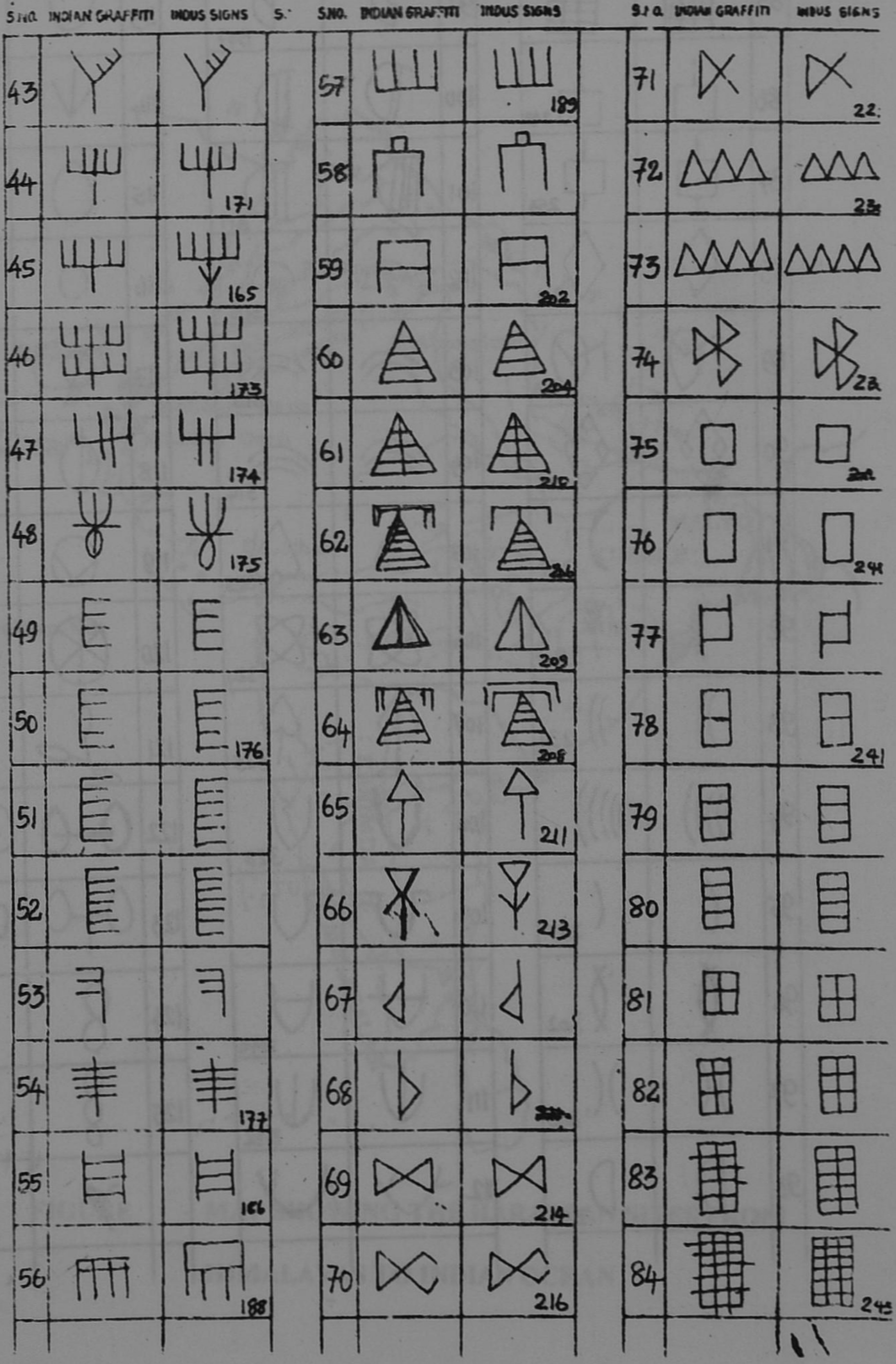
1	2	3	4	5
PURE GRAFFITI:				
42.		Mala vil=Malaivil	Hill like bow	Right to left
43.		Mū āḷ=Mūvāḷ	Three men *	-do-

* Three men are shown at the centre.

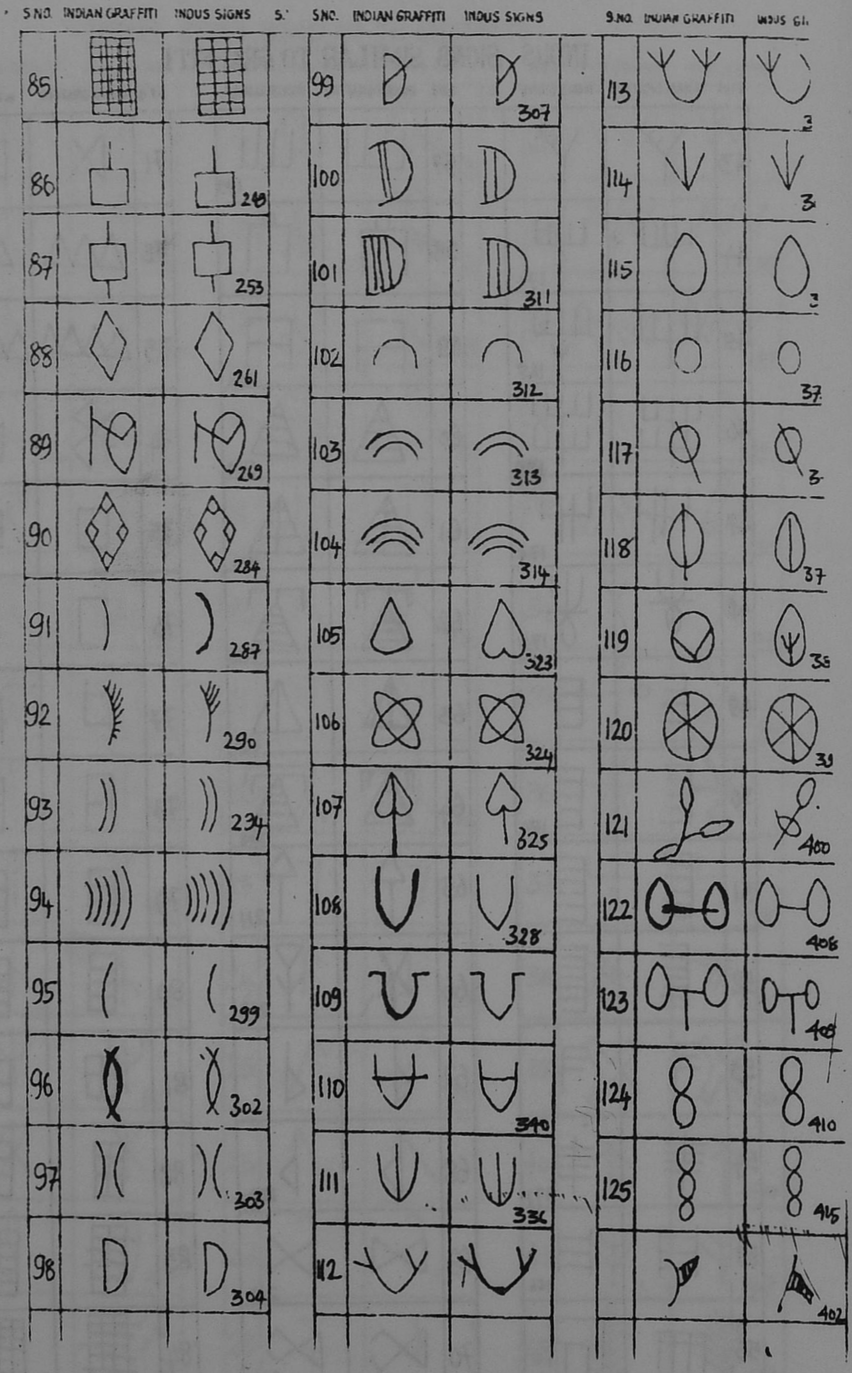
INDUS SIGNS SIMILAR TO GRAFFITI



INDUS SIGNS SIMILAR TO GRAFFITI



INDUS SIGNS SIMILAR TO GRAFFITI



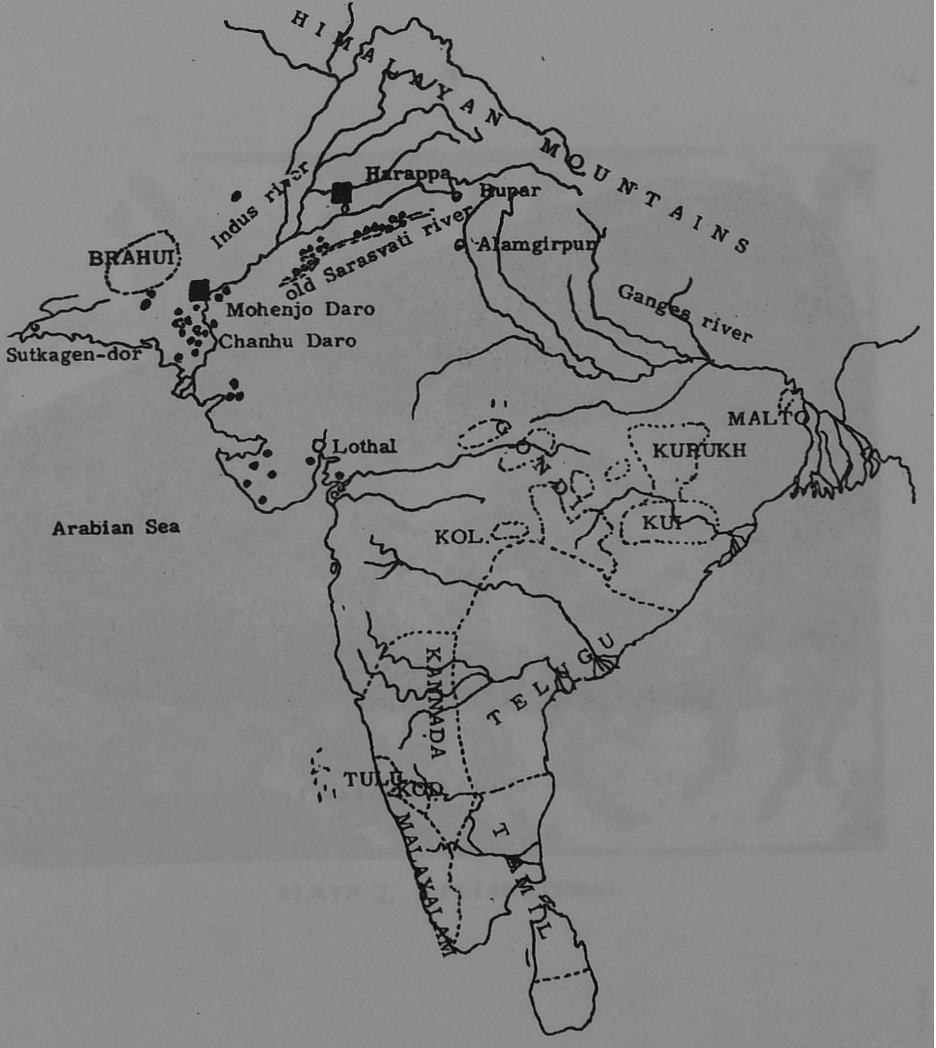


FIGURE - MAP SHOWING THE HARAPPAN SITES FROM HIMALAYAS TO INDIAN OCEAN

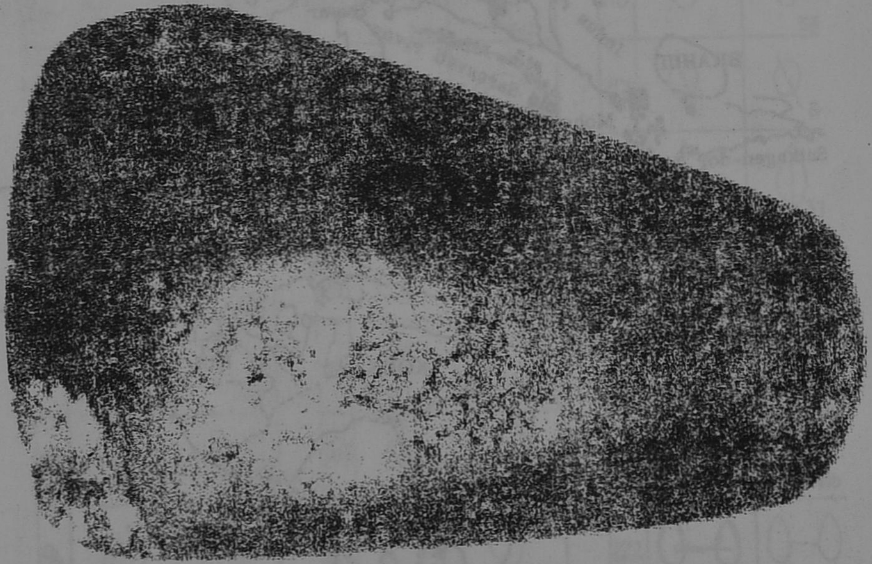


PLATE 1 - KANDIYUR – NEOLITHIC CELT

PLATE 2 - PULIKATIMAL

PLATE 3 - INDUS SEAL WITH BUFFALOW HORN

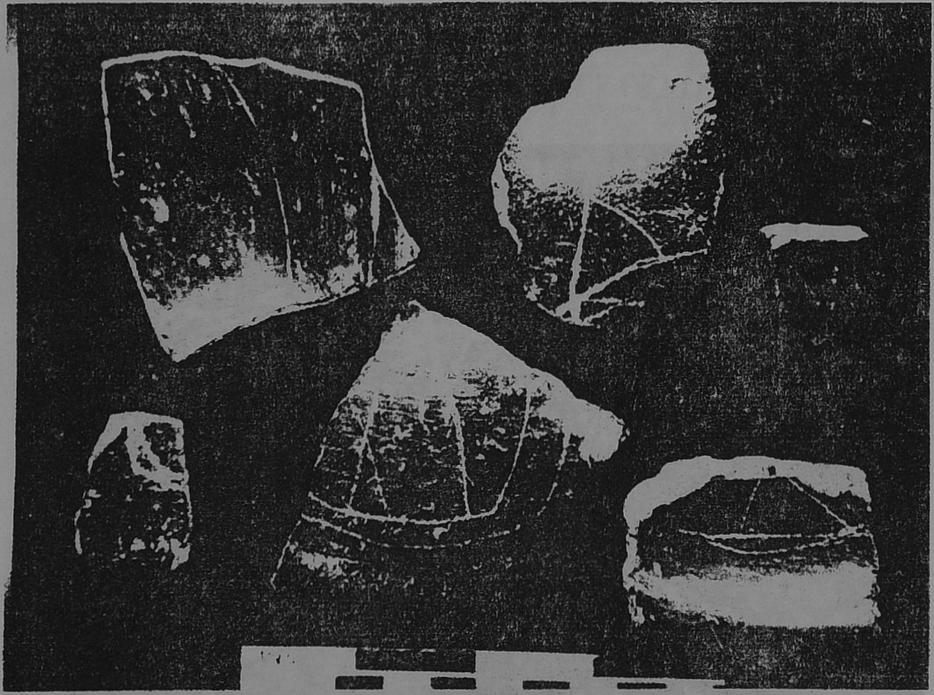


PLATE 4 - POTSHERD WITH PRIMITIVE SHIP OR BOAT WITH CENTRAL CABIN

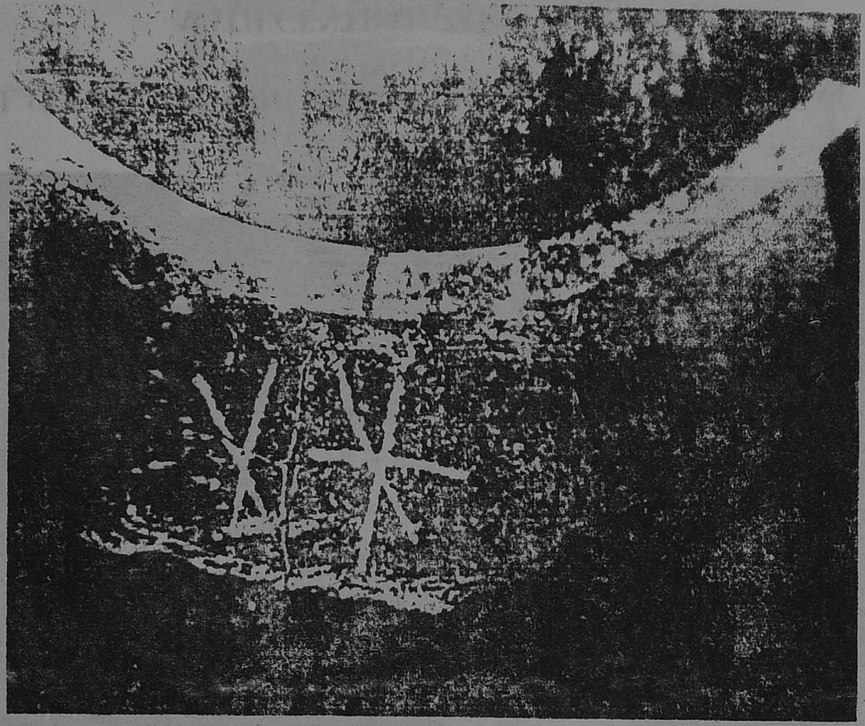


PLATE 5 - POTSHERD WITH INDUS LETTERS - READING -

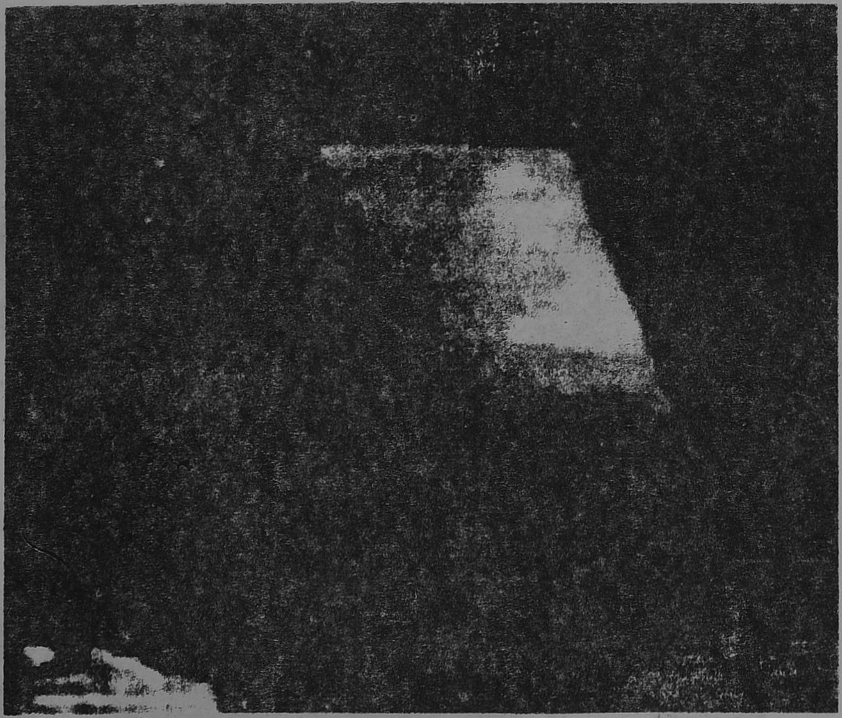


PLATE 6 - POTSHERD WITH GNAFFITI SHOWING WRITING

– RIGHT TO LEFT

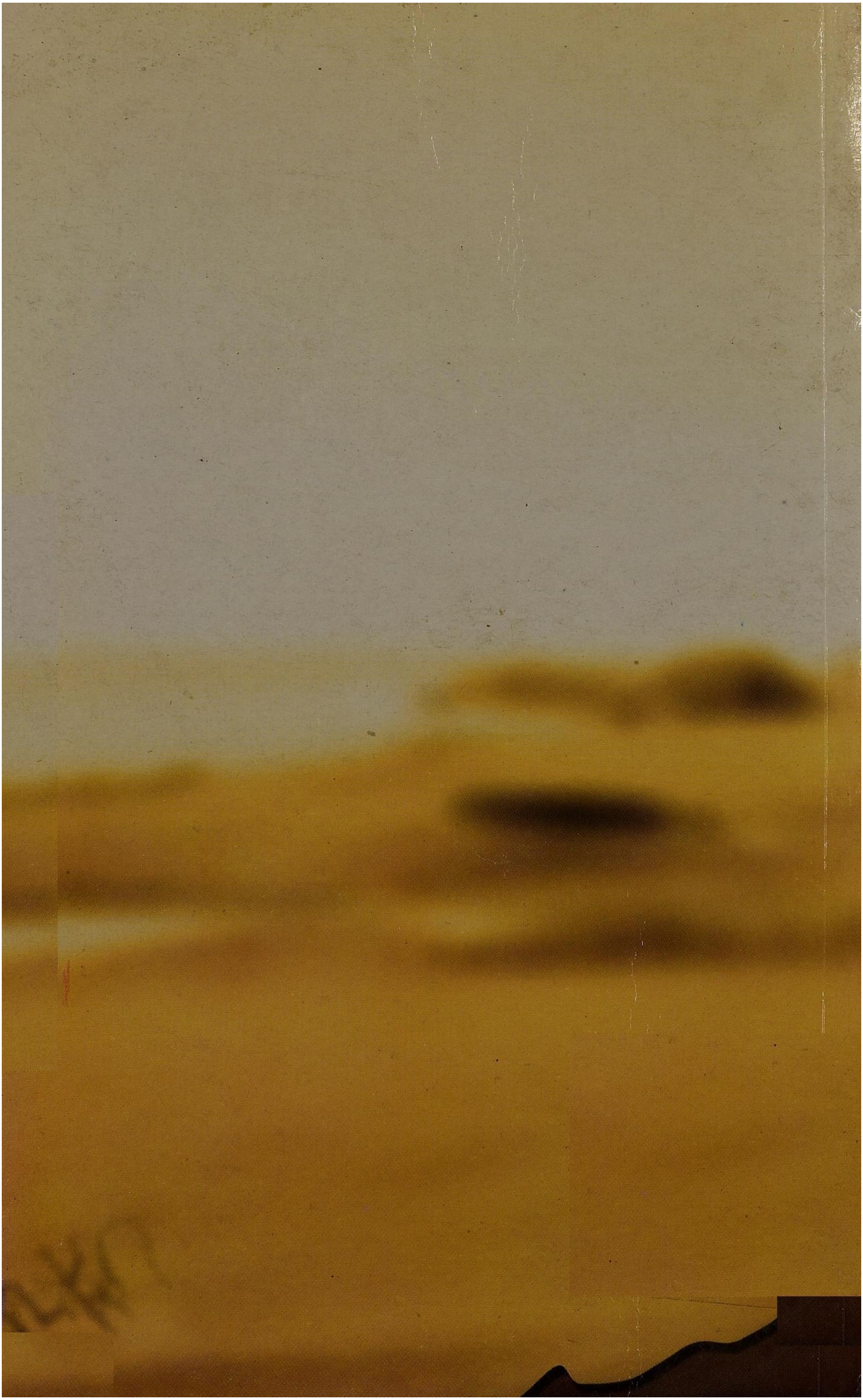



PLATE 7 - HAWK BEAKED FIGURE - KILVALAI PAINTINGS